

AMBROSE THE SCULPTOR.

AMBROSE THE SCULPTOR:

AN

Autobiography of Artist Life.

BY

MRS. ROBERT CARTWRIGHT,

AUTHOR OF "CHRISTABELLE," &c.

"Set me as a seal upon thine heart,
as a seal upon thine arm: for love is
strong as death; jealousy is cruel as
the grave: the coals thereof are coals
of fire, which hath a most vehement
flame."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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APPENDIX

TO

AMBROSE ARNOLD'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

APPENDIX.

NOTE Appended to the above Autobiography, by FRANCIS LOCKWOOD, the favourite Friend and Pupil of AMBROSE ARNOLD.

My revered friend and master is no more ! and it now only remains for me, as the sincerely attached scholar of this eminent man, to add a few lines of my own, in order to complete this history of his life.

His superior talent raised him to the position of the first Sculptor of his day, and he ended his earthly career full of honours and reputation. His genius, his perseverance in his Art, together with his high and inflexible integrity in all his dealings, rendered him universally esteemed by the members

of his own profession, as he was deservedly beloved by his friends and pupils for the mildness of his disposition and the simplicity of his character.

Living, he was devoted to his art, which in him had become a second nature: he died in the arms of his dutiful and affectionate daughter, the being whom he most loved in this world—happy in his latter days, still happier in his tranquil and Christian end.

I have thought this record of his inward thoughts and experience merited the perusal of the many who take the walk of High Art as their vocation in life, and have therefore, as a duty to my profession, set before them an example how to study, to suffer, and to succeed. May it prove servicable to them as it has to me! And I have added a short account of some of his less known works, as instances of his refined taste in conception and execution; since, in my opinion, they exhibit the skill and power of the man as completely as those which have been for some years thoroughly appreciated by the public.

No. 1.—MODESTY,

Considered in the relation of Female Purity.

One of his most exquisite works was a statue of Modesty in its womanly guise, represented under a type entirely new and original, and which, according to my ideas, showed as great a genius as any of the creations of his chisel.

A figure, veiled from head to foot in close but not heavy drapery, stands with her arms folded, as in the act of drawing round her the mantle which should shield her from observation. The face alone is visible—the eyes not downcast, but elevated and directed towards heaven. She seems in the act of turning away with disgust from a serpent, which, with other crawling reptiles, are seen on the ground at her feet, themselves rather crouching and slinking away from her, as if awed by a superior power. The grace of the form, the simplicity of the composition, and the beauty and expression of the features, together with the highly wrought execution of the draperies, contributed, in my opinion, to make this one of Arnold's most successful pieces of sculpture.

No. 2.—THE FIRST NAVIGATOR.

A very clever piece of sculpture in the difficult style of low-relief or Archaic art, like that of the early Greeks. A youth, clad as a shepherd or hunter, of a time of the first dawn of civilisation, sees a beauteous sea-nymph on the shore of a rocky islet, between which and the strand on which he kneels a wide channel intervenes. He has hollowed the trunk of a tree into a canoe, but seems unable to launch it. The nymph, smiling, beckons him : he appears in despair, though resolution is in his countenance. Water-fowl are paddling about, which gives him the idea of oars, one of which, lying by his side, he has already roughly made.

Cupid is seen flying in the distance.

No. 3.—AN INDIAN GIRL

*Watching her Lamp of Augury by Ganges' Side—in
Low Relief.*

A young Hindoo girl, a figure of exquisite beauty and proportion, clad in the light garb which forms the costume of the natives of India, is represented

as sitting by the pebbly bank of the Ganges, whose rippling waters just bathe her tender and childlike feet. The countenance, retaining the rounded contour of infancy, is marked by the characteristic Hindoo features, moulded into a strong expression of anxious attention. She has just committed to the waters the mystic lamp embarked in a lotus-flower, which floating down the mighty stream, is destined to typify the fate of her first, her true love. Her eyes are fixed on the frail freight, she watches with breathless impatience, her heart borne with the lotus-leaf. A palm-branch and a garland of tropical flowers lie neglected at her feet—with a few shells just above the water's edge.

It is a beauteous work of art. Grace, innocence, and love animate the marble; love, I may say, directed the sculptor's hand, for I knew that the idea and the likeness were taken from recollections of his wife.

No. 4.—THE SPARTAN MOTHER,

A Group of Three Figures.

An aged female, still retaining traces of beauty and high soul, stands fixed as a rock, her hands forcibly clasped, and her fine features drawn into the conflicting expressions of maternal feeling and heroic courage.

The body of her son slain in battle has just been laid at her feet: her only son, the perfection of manly form and beauty. A comrade, himself wounded, kneels by him, and by his earnest and expressive features seems telling the sad tale with a mingled feeling of grief and triumph. One solitary tear of friendship rests upon his cheek—on that of the mother, none.

No. 5.—PETRARCH AND LAURA.

A powerful alto rilievo, in which Petrarch is seen leaning on a rock, at the fountain of Vaucluse, musing on his unhappy fate, and, it may be, whispering to himself in low accents some heavenly sonnet in praise of his virtuous mistress.

On the opposite bank, Laura, supported by a gnarled mountain-oak, rests tranquilly awaiting till the poet shall address her. The unruffled pool lies between them, while cliffs, mantled with ivy, hang as it were suspended over-head, and cast portentous gloom upon the scene.

No. 6.—COPERNICUS.

A seated figure of the Astronomer wrapt in deep contemplation.

By his side are the remains of two spheres or orreries of different constructions, both broken and cast away. He points and rests his hand upon another larger and more complete one, in which the sun is duly placed in the centre, and the few principal planets, known in his time, are placed in their correct positions. Instruments of various kinds, and a Bible open at the passage, "*Cæli enarrant gloriam Dei*," lie at his feet.

No. 7.—BASSO RILIEVO,

In Three Compartments, for the Entrance of a Mausoleum.

Life—symbolized by two children, boy and girl, lovely shapes of health and innocence, sporting unconsciously on the borders of an open grave in chase of a butterfly, which, still eluding their grasp, has perched on the very edge of the sepulchre.

Death—the same two children are lying asleep locked in each other's arms within the tomb—the butterfly now bruised and inanimate, is seen clasped in their joined hands—garlands of cypress and rosemary lie at their feet.

Immortality—represented by a veiled figure rising from the tomb—bearing the two children, awake and calm, nestled under its ample wings.

Her form is indicated rather than seen through the long transparent draperies, and seems to spring by its own lightness into æther; whilst the butterfly whose expanded pinions emblematic of the soul are now wreathed with plumes of flame, resting on the head of the figure, directs its course to heaven.

No. 8.—JEPHTHA.

A statue of almost colossal proportions. A warrior of the grandest Jewish type, herculean in limb, commanding in feature and dignity, stands alone, but in a moving attitude, or rather as one suddenly transfixed by a deadly stroke from unseen hand ere he can pause from his weary march. His sword, half-sheathed, is by his side; his shield is cast behind him with a wreath of victory flung on it, a prize now neglected, for his eye sees afar off his triumphant daughter (not in the sculpture) with her joyous maidens—and he has remembered his vow! The expression of the countenance baffles description.

No. 9.—BASSO RILIEVO.

“O ye spirits and souls of the righteous, bless ye the Lord; praise him and magnify him for ever.”

A crowd of children of divine beauty are kneeling, some with clasped, some with extended hands, in every variety of attitude of prayer and praise—

supported in the clouds—while above—the canopy of heaven is indistinctly sculptured into a vault of innumerable cherubs, of which the firmament itself seems composed—the very Heavenly Host welcoming the liberated souls with Hosanna in the Highest!

No. 10.—BASSO RILIEVO.

“O ye holy and humble men of heart, bless ye the Lord; praise him and magnify him for ever.”

A great number of figures of all ages kneeling on the earth—some with eyes fixed on the opening Heavens, from which a dove in glory appears issuing: some with eyes downcast fixed on the ground—in varied groups and positions—but all animated with the expression of deep and fervent piety.

For these two, see the latter verses of the Canticum in Morning Prayer.

No. 11.—A SOLDIER'S MONUMENT.

A large Latin Cross in pure white Marble.

The warrior—his head uncovered and lowly bent—is surrendering his armour piece by piece at the foot of the cross, humbly kneeling.

Two attendant angels, St Michael and St Gabriel, are receiving the emblems of earthly harness—his breastplate and sword—the heart and hand of the warrior. One of them points upward with celestial encouragement to the words written upon the head of the cross :

“ Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

No. 12.—PEACE.

A female figure, of majestic stature and noble countenance, is represented leaning against a cross. In her hand she bears an olive-branch, and at her feet spring various flowers, among which a young lamb is securely nestled. Her other hand presses

a gentle dove to her bosom ; she looks down upon her two innocent *protégés* with a smile of tenderness and encouragement. The draperies are ample and flowing, and the whole spirit of the composition breathes mutual confidence and repose.

THE END.



AMBROSE THE SCULPTOR.

CHAPTER I.

Honour is the conscience of doing just and laudable actions, independent of the success of those actions.

SIR RICHARD STEELE.

Oh that we two were maying
Over the fragrant leas ;
Like children with young flowers playing
Down the stream of the rich spring breeze.

Oh that we two sat dreaming
On the sward of some sheep-trimm'd down ;
Watching the white mist steaming
From river and mead and town.

Oh that we two lay sleeping
Under the churchyard sod ;
With our limbs at rest in the quiet earth's breast,
And our souls at home with God !

KINGSLEY.

It is unnecessary to say that I passed the most wretched night that ever mortal was doomed to

suffer, as far as mental agony could make it so. The next morning found me not only mentally but physically ill, and I was so evidently on the eve of some violent malady, that it followed of course that the wedding must be indefinitely deferred. My situation fortunately spared me the necessity of making this request myself, and the physician who had been sent for explained—or rather took upon himself to assert—that my fever would not allow of its celebration for a long time to come.

My mind was torn between duties so incompatible that there was not room for anything like preference, or even will, to turn the balance between them. It was a question of fidelity, or desertion, to one or the other of two most upright and noble-hearted maidens, to each of whom I had been lawfully betrothed, and to each of whom respectively I had vowed—as at the time I was entitled to do—a free and devoted attachment for life. No religious contract had passed between us, but I was not the less bound in honour: but to which?

Firmly endeavouring to decide so as to fulfil that obligation which, on thorough examination, should prove to be my duty before God, I cared compara-

tively little what judgment man might pass on the occasion ; yet I could not conceal from myself that however the decision fell, what was honour and duty towards the one, must be a cruel abandonment of the other.

I prayed, I tried to determine for myself, but my mind was unequal to the struggle. I became delirious, and my fever attained in the course of the day an alarming height. Towards night it abated, and with the aid of opiates I procured some hours' quiet ; a lethargic quiet, not to be called sleep—hardly rest.

In the morning I was calm, perfectly master of my senses, and even of my memory, recollecting but too well the fatal letter and the events to which it related. I was allowed to get up, though in a pitiable state of weakness. I was dressed and seated in an easy chair in my once happy sitting-room, when I was told that Miss Owen had come herself to my door to inquire after me,—and after having heard a more favourable report than she had expected, she asked to be admitted to see me.

Trembling as one who is about to receive some fatal communication, I yet summoned nerve enough

—courage it could scarcely be called—to answer in the affirmative—and Lilith entered my apartment.

She was pale, very pale, and evidently making a great effort to support herself, as she slowly crossed the room and seated herself in an arm-chair by my side. Her health happily had not suffered from the shock she had sustained, as mine had done ; but to her the blow, though great, had not brought the additional torment of doubt and hesitation which, as I scruple not now to confess, was the worm that gnawed me to the heart. To her clear judgment and rectitude of principle, I was to be indebted for the final determination that I had to take, and at this distance of time, when age has pressed upon me with hasty steps, and all passion has long since faded into distance, I still believe Lilith's recommendation to have been that which was best founded in justice, in honour, and in moral duty.

“ Ambrose, dear Ambrose, let me still call you, though our situation to each other is about to be so different to what it was,—tell me, can you now confide in me as you were wont to do ? ”

“ Never shall I cease to do so,” I replied. “ For

that reason I rejoice to see you again by my side. You know the awful facts announced in that letter—counsel me, dear Lilith, and speak balm to my soul. You have known my inmost thoughts, you can appreciate the position in which I stood to Carmen, you must know, if you even are spared the feeling, you must know the nature of the new difficulties that surround me.”

“I do indeed see and appreciate them thoroughly: trust me, dear Ambrose, I feel them also. Guileless and confiding as you have described that poor girl to be,—affectionate as I know your heart to be, I cannot doubt the agony of your mind as long as it is unsettled. I see and admire her character as portrayed in her most touching but modest appeal to Lord Montacute,—her forbearance,—her unwillingness to prejudge you,—have made a deep impression upon me in the estimate I now am drawn to make of her virtue and of her understanding. You have a duty towards her, Ambrose.....Carmen has a prior claim.....you cannot deny.....”

Here poor Lilith's sobs choked her utterance, and I, who but too well comprehended the point which

her conscious rectitude impelled her to enforce upon me, I who had called on her for counsel, could only bow my head in silent acquiescence. Many were the tears I shed ; but, yielding to the true and disinterested advice of my angel-guide, I resolved to pray for strength to pursue the path of honour, and not to falter by the way. Lilith advised me thus :—

“ Your first duty is to Carmen. That duty is partly satisfied by your simple mental resolution, as soon as it shall be irrevocably taken : is it so ? ”

“ It is,” I replied firmly ; but not calmly : I could not control my emotion.

“ Then,” pursued she, “ it will be yet more completely fulfilled, when you shall have written, as you ought to do without the least delay, to Lord Montacute, and through him to Carmen herself, to announce it.”

“ I see the justice of your recommendation, I will do it immediately.”

“ You must then—and this perhaps,” said Lilith, hesitating for the first time, “ this perhaps will be the most painful task of all—you must see my father. None but you, not even myself, can with such propriety announce to him the altered state of

our circumstances with respect to each other. You only can explain the cause."

Her words, spoken in a low, tremulous, but not the less impressive, tone, carried conviction irresistibly to my mind: and I saw at once the necessity for my dreaded interview with Sir Caradoc, and the imperious obligation I was under, both for Lilith's sake and my own, to summon courage for the trial. I was not ignorant what it was that awaited me. But, in all my grief and agitation, I had not been blind to the noble conduct of Lilith. It proved to me now that I was on the point of being separated from her forever, that I had been slow indeed in discovering the transcendent beauty of her calm, disinterested, retiring, yet courageous, mind. Not a word did she utter on the subject of her own sufferings, her mortified affections, the sacrifice she had now to make—to a stranger—of her own cherished prospects of happiness, but yesterday so fresh, so genuine; not a word of reproach or lamentation—not even a spoken regret was there of the blight suddenly thrown upon the promise of to-morrow—no, she had strength of character to maintain a moral

superiority over me, and to counsel me according to the virtuous dictates of her own pure heart, while that heart was almost broken. If anything could add to the bitterness of our parting, it was that she found herself in the position of being compelled to become the adviser of it. I honour her, I rejoice even now in doing justice to her, and in confessing man's inferiority in the hour of trial.

I requested an interview with my uncle. I entered his study in a state of feeling not to be described. My courage was indeed animated to the utmost degree by the self-devotion of Lilith, who had so nobly pointed out the line that duty and justice commanded me to take. I know not what Sir Caradoc may have thought of my now wretched appearance, worn by illness of mind and body, and in a state of desperation. I know not what he may have expected as the object of my desired conversation with him, for, as I entered hastily, little or no salutation passed between us, or at least I heard none. In fact, I was deaf, blind, insensible to all around me, and bent alone on fulfilling the hard task I had undertaken.

“ Sir Caradoc,” I said abruptly, “ you are the first person entitled to hear the change.....the awful change of circumstances that has taken place. You are, as Lilith’s father, entitled to know the events which I have learnt within these few days—these few hours.”

“ Well, sir, what then?—What events?—What do you trouble yourself or me either for about events?—Are not the settlements sufficient?—What do you mean to find fault with next?”

“ Oh, Sir Caradoc, have mercy ; I am in no mood for taunts ; I have no fault to find—no.....”

“ What then, sir? Do not your ideas and mine agree upon the arrangements of property you have already consented to? Let me tell you, sir.....”

“ Sir Caradoc, I beseech you, hear.....”

“ No, sir, I won’t hear!—I suppose your outlandish notions are for setting all in confusion again ; but let me tell you, sir, it won’t do—won’t do with me, sir.”

“ Indeed, sir, it is something very different from what you imagine,” cried I, forced to raise my voice in order to compel a hearing, which I was not otherwise, it seemed, likely to obtain : “ listen a moment

to what I have to impart to you: in a word, my ill-starred marriage with your angel-daughter can never, never take place."

A dead pause followed these words of mine, and the ominous silence of Sir Caradoc now left me ample time to proceed.

"I have just learnt," I continued, "that the report I had heard of the death of a lady to whom I had been previously engaged, is false, and as she lives, my pledged faith, my honour require that I return to fulfil my promise of becoming her husband."

Words cannot describe the rage I saw gathering on Sir Caradoc's brow. Already suspicious, and put out by the slightest intimation, or rather conjecture, that I had anything to say in postponement of the marriage, you may judge, from what I have told you of his character, whether this fresh and most unexpected announcement was not like throwing a lighted match into gunpowder. His countenance became scarlet with anger; at first, utterance seemed utterly denied him; but at length the storm burst forth and fell on me in all its fury.

"You, you.....break off this match, sir?—You

dare.....you cast off my daughter, sir?—You dare to tell me that you'll marry another woman—some foreign creature of course—one suitable to your outlandish education, and fit for you.....Who is she, may I beg?"

"It matters little who she is, Sir Caradoc, but, nevertheless, as you condescend to speak disparagingly of one of whom you know nothing, I scruple not, I shrink not from telling you that she has the mind and talents of the most gifted of her sex; the daughter of the famous Roman sculptor, Vitelli, although destined to exercise her transcendant musical talents on the public stage, is in virtue, heart, and all that constitutes perfection in woman, in all respects worthy to be the friend, on equal terms, of Lilith....."

"Out!.....you compare a singer, a public singer, a star of the theatre, forsooth, to my daughter? A girl on the stage, an Italian, to Miss Owen? You slight, you despise the oldest family in North Wales, or in the whole kingdom either, for the sake of a race of artists, as I suppose you call them: artists indeed!—a blood truly like your own..... your accursed father's....."

"Stop, sir, while I may speak to you with some-

thing like respect. My case with you, sir, is a purely personal one, and I will not suffer my unfortunate father's name to be dragged in as a make-weight to what you proudly choose to consider my offences. You cannot yourself enhance the value or the honour of the marriage I must forego with your most amiable daughter.....I feel my dear cousin's excellence.....my mother....."

"Your cousin? Who made her your cousin? Oh, your mother.....my poor, weak, foolish sisterhappy she is not here to see you squander the good fortune she had chalked out for you....."

"Happy indeed," I groaned, or rather sobbed, mentally figuring my dear mother in such a scene as this.

"Listen to me, sir, and don't defend yourself..... not a word more.....I see your father, your false, perjured father in you, rising again to dishonour..... to dishonour, I say, a second time the family *he* could only impose upon once. Begone, sir, forth out of my house—never let me set sight upon you again. I have heard enough: would to God you had never entered these doors, or your false, treacherous father before you!"⁴

I heard a slight noise behind me, and on looking

round I beheld Lilith, who had entered the room unperceived, and was now standing behind me bathed in tears. She moved; and her attitude seeming, in the eyes of her infuriated father, an audacious commencement of remonstrance on her part (which it probably was), he crushed any such intention at once by unfeeling reproaches, calling her, angel as she was, a poor spiritless fool to have permitted the addresses of one so far beneath her, as Sir Caradoc had now discovered me to be..... just like his own weak degraded sister thirty years before her.

My patience was exhausted. No consideration, save that it would have been cruelty to the generous girl who had risked her father's favour, and all the comfort of a home—which could never again be to her what it had been—to serve, to preserve me in the path of honour—no other consideration could have kept me from retorting the rude insults to my parents, to which my uncle in his wrath had given utterance. I silently left the presence of this haughty and tyrannical old man: I walked straight through the gardens, down the park to the village, looking neither to the right nor to the left on the

lovely scenes lately so dear to me ; I walked firmly, determined not to look back, and to stop at the village inn but the time requisite to send for and receive my luggage, and then depart for London.

But once I paused. In proceeding down the well-known path that led through Lilith's garden to the park, a form met my eye, which I could not pass with indifference. It was Lilith herself, awaiting me for the last time in her own domain—as we had been used to call it. For, while I had been giving a few words of necessary direction to my wondering servant in the hall, she had hastily passed out, knowing the walk that I must follow, so as to be there (where no intruder ever came) before me.

Deadly pale, but still calm and self-possessed, like a ministering spirit in my path, she stood, without a tear, to wish me as it seemed an eternal farewell, with prayers for my future welfare, such as she of all mortals was best entitled to put up. I kissed the hem of her garment in the misery of my humility, for I felt her superiority then more than ever. She raised me, presented her forehead to my frenzied kiss, and saying, "Cousin, remem-

ber, for your sake will Carmen be ever dear to me," she gently but firmly withdrew herself from my embrace, and placed what appeared to be a letter in my hands.

One look of tearful anguish and affection, and she was gone.

As I walked on, half-unconscious in my grief, my eyes mechanically rested upon the sealed paper she had placed in my hands. I eagerly opened it, and read a few lines, hurriedly written with a pencil in the envelope, to this effect:—

"Dear Ambrose, do not refuse me what may be my last request. For Carmen's sake make use of the enclosed—for *her* sake—and for that of your ever affectionate cousin, 'LILITH.'"

It was a bank-bill for £100, the utmost extent, as I well knew, of her own private resources.

Dear, generous cousin! gratefully, humbly did I accept the gift thus nobly tendered to my necessities.

CHAPTER II.

Yes—she is mine, and I am hers—
The glory of the earth and sky,
The distant music of the spheres,
Within our raptured spirits lie ;
Love's harmonies, vast, deep, profound,
Filling the universe around.

Yes—she is mine, and I am hers—
(Though from this Eden of the heart
Forth by yon outer gate of tears
We too must pass—yet not to part),
Together we shall share the strife,
The care and toil of mortal life.

Yes—she is mine, and I am hers—
Whate'er betide of good or ill ;
So shall our thoughts in after-years,
To these fond mem'ries constant still,
Ever confess that Love most wise
Whose flaming torch guards paradise.

I WILL not enlarge upon the details of my departure from Plas Owen, of my journey to London, or of my subsequent arrival at Rome.

It is sufficient to say that I parted from Wales ; from Lilith my more than cousin ; from Plas Owen, which I had by degrees learnt to consider as my new-found home ; and, lastly, from the tomb of my beloved mother, with an agonizing heart. However my mind was made up : duty and more than common duty lay before me, and I persisted. My approach to Rome, under the very peculiar circumstances that drew me thither, was accompanied by a variety of sad thoughts. I saw, as I came near the venerable capital of the christian world, the numerous and well-known objects that had been rendered dear as well as familiar to me from childhood ; sites whose picturesque beauty had afforded me and my fellow-students many a subject for a sketch ; ruins and fragments of antiquity which had been among my earliest studies while a pupil of Vitelli's. All these I had often recalled to memory with pleasure while in England, either in reflecting upon subjects of design, or in the explanations, or I might say instructions, which I had been in the habit of giving to Lilith upon similar branches of art. I had never dreamed that I could revisit these loved scenes of childhood with any other than the

most joyous sensations. Yet how different was the reality !

I will not describe my meeting with my Carmen. You can imagine it far better than it could be expressed in words. All was speedily explained between us ; my simple statement sufficed, and was received with far more of unhesitating trust than, alas, it deserved ; for I alluded to nothing beyond the fact of having believed the account of her death as it had appeared in the newspapers, which fully accounted for my otherwise inexplicable silence. Her deep and perfect joy found no vent in questioning or reproach. We had both suffered, in different ways, and in different degrees ; but her trials had in fact been harder to bear than mine. After nursing her beloved father through the frightful attack of yellow fever which terminated in his death, she had herself been stricken by that fatal disorder. Her constitution, already enfeebled by disease, was ill calculated to struggle against the terrible malady, and she was finally reduced to such an extremity by its ravages, that the reports of her death, published in some of the European journals, were not to be wondered at, and indeed had so far foundation, that

a belief to that effect had prevailed for some days in the town itself of Havanna. On her recovery, she had been removed by some kind friends of hers for change of air far up the country. It is needless to say my letter of inquiry to Feliciani (as to the particulars of her and her father's death) had never been received by him, he having quitted Milan on a tour shortly before that period, so that no tidings from me of any kind having reached her at all, she was fully justified in applying to Lord Montacute for assistance and advice in the first place, instead of her apparently recusant lover,—it will be remembered, she still considered herself as affianced to me.

I found Lord Montacute had most honorably kept my secret with respect to my engagement with my cousin Lilith. He met me now with the utmost warmth and cordiality ; but I thought him looking ill and depressed in spirits. Carmen herself was evidently much worn by all she had gone through. Her slender form betokened the effects of climate and enervating disease, and her pale countenance showed too plainly the ravages of fever ; but her eyes were ever the same, dark, lustrous, and full of

fire : apparently larger from the attenuated character of her features, they seemed to have gained in earnestness and force of expression what her complexion might have lost in freshness and youthful bloom. Her voice, alas, for all purposes of her profession, was but too plainly lost for ever. This, indeed, at the moment struck me as a very secondary misfortune ; it was such a relief, such a happiness to see Carmen there, in life and being restored, and animated by the same love and faith with which she had parted from me, that I could think of nothing but her restoration, as it seemed, to this world, and deferred all minor considerations to an indefinite period. Carmen was there—Carmen was mine,I could only thank Providence, and accept the boon as it was offered to me. Our immediate marriage was the first step which I urged upon her. I have said I would not enter upon my history ;—scarcely could I bear to hear hers, of the eventful years since we had last met. I could not at such a moment prevail upon myself to relate to her anything which must be of painful interest to her if I told the whole truth. And the whole truth I was determined to tell her if I spoke upon the subject,

as I have now told it to you. But I imagined that I respected her feelings in abstaining from a full explanation of past events; and I may add that in so doing I at the same time certainly spared my own. I am far from wishing to blame the reserves and delicacies which the refinements of civilized life interpose between an arranged marriage and its celebration. The delays that friends consider as consonant with propriety, the coyness of maiden youth, the wish to avoid a vulgar haste in pressing the nuptials, the mystery as to the wedding-day—all these little trifles belong to a rank and condition in the world to which we at that time had neither of us any pretension: our preliminaries were short, our determination irrevocable; and the day was soon fixed for the ceremony. There was no need for any formal notice to our few friends; no preparations for a wedding-breakfast; no matrimonial far-off tour, which is so much *de rigueur* in higher circles: our only witnesses, I may say our only friends, were Lord Montacute, who most kindly and judiciously assisted us, and Feliciani, whose unremitting care had never left Carmen without a pro-

tector. He had made the journey from Milan to Rome on purpose to meet her ; and on her marriage acted as her parent at the altar.

Lord Montacute had—previous to my arrival, and as soon as he became aware, by my letters, of my intention, should Carmen agree to it, to be married at Rome—taken steps to procure, without delay, from England a complete and suitable *trousseau*, which he presented to my bride. It is needless to say, that the delicacy with which this seasonable gift was offered was deeply appreciated by both Carmen and myself, and the earnest wishes for our future happiness by which it was accompanied, were truly the expressions of a friendship which never afterwards forsook us. Lord Montacute's character was so thoroughly unselfish, that even the pure pleasure of doing a benevolent action was inferior to that which he felt at seeing it done : satisfaction at the result was with him a higher gratification than even the honest consciousness of having conferred a benefit.

In short, we were married ; and for a brief period I forgot all my misfortunes,—too thankful to

Heaven that I had at last accomplished an union with the object of my earliest and most devoted affection.

We retired, according to custom, or more exactly, according to English custom, to pass a short honeymoon at Tivoli. In that delightful spot, in which the graces of classical art blend so happily with the choicest scenery of Nature, I passed the happiest days of my existence. I there learnt to know Carmen's fervent character, her depth of love and attachment to me: it seemed a rapturous dream, kindly sent by Providence to repay us for our previous disasters. We wandered through the groves which had furnished studies to the greatest painters; we strolled over the rocky mountains, famous in many a page of Roman history; we admired again and again that most graceful temple, or listened to the melodious fall of those cool waters which gave to the busy echoes, as it seemed to us, the very sounds—the very notes of Love. Anon we culled the fair and fragrant wild flowers of Italy, which I wove into garlands for the dark tresses of my spouse, or sung softly to her guitar in Neptune's grot, beneath festoons of the ivy and the vine.

I soon, however, became aware of the absolute necessity there was that I should without further delay resume the practice of my profession. My taste for Art, and in particular for that branch of it which I had formerly made my peculiar study, had not in the least diminished, though the cessation of work during two years made it necessary for me to return to the labours of the *atelier* with renewed industry. I redoubled my application ; I even rapidly studied and copied again the best models of the antique, in order to refresh my memory and restore my taste to its former chasteness, before I ventured to set up a studio for myself ; or to employ pupils upon any design of my own. Lord Montacute highly approved my resolute determination to make my way in my profession ; but advised me, after seeing the difficulty there was for a new sculptor to establish himself in Rome, owing to the immense competition that existed there at that period, to return to England.

“ There,” he truly said, “ you will have fairer field open to you, fewer rivals, and, after a time, higher rewards. You are now able to establish yourself with equal facility in either country, and I

hope you will prefer that in which I can, in some degree at least, procure you both introductions and patronage."

This advice, given with as much kindness as judgment, was too good to be neglected.

The events, or rather the misfortunes, which had so thickly accompanied the career of both my wife and myself since we had last met in Rome, had thoroughly indisposed both her and me to a prolonged residence there. The contrast between Italy as we had known it, the fair scene of our innocent childhood, and its present aspect to us, surrounded as we were with difficulties, and deprived, each of us, of our affectionate parents, was too strong to be anything but painful.

We decided then without difficulty on trying our fortune in England,—a country which would have the advantage of novelty for Carmen, while the two years which I had spent there had made me feel sufficiently at home to settle in it with some degree of confidence for the future.

London, which must be our residence, was so far removed from the sphere of my uncle's movements

as to make me feel quite safe from the apprehension of ever falling in his way, while I might perchance from time to time gain indirectly some intelligence of my still dear and affectionate cousin.

Lord Montacute had kindly devised a plan for facilitating our journey to England in a manner that I should not have thought of asking, and indeed of which I should not, if left to myself, have thought at all. He proposed that, having two carriages, Carmen and I should occupy one, taking charge at the same time of some of his valuable purchases which he wished to forward to England under safe convoy : there were valuable manuscripts, books, and small works of art and antiquity, which he knew were not likely to pass securely through many frontiers, unless in the charge of some responsible person. Thankfully entering into his views, and partly guessing that he adopted this mode of transporting his collections in order to be of service to us without appearing to confer a favour, I accepted Lord Montacute's offer without hesitation, with great difficulty restraining the expression of a gratitude I felt most deeply.

We left Rome therefore, and travelled slowly, to avoid expense, towards the country that was henceforward to be the scene of my exertions. I say my exertions, because, although Carmen was resolutely determined to bear her part in sustaining, and, as far as might be, warding off the poverty that threatened to be our lot, yet the loss of her voice, the principal means of exhibiting her peculiar talent, rendered it difficult to devise a plan for turning the resources of her thoroughly good musical education to account. Lord Montacute was to leave Rome some days after us; but, travelling with greater expedition, would reach London about the same time.

I now experienced what I had never before comprehended,—the sufficiency of a resolved and persevering mind to make its owner happy in the face of any conceivable difficulty. If I now understood this for the first time in my own case, it was yet a greater novelty to me to find how far an attached and congenial heart like that of her whom I now proudly called my wife, was capable of lightening every burden, of diminishing or softening every care.

Carmen and I had but one will,—one wish, to assist each other, and to smoothe that rugged path through life which lay before us. Her own quiet and inexpensive habits never led her to desire anything beyond our very limited means: while her independence of character kept her far above lamenting the present sad inferiority of her lot to that which she might have attained, had her early success in her profession not been interrupted.

Knowing nothing of my affairs, nor of the vicissitudes of fortune to which I had been exposed during the two years of our separation, she was spared the pain—which, for my part, I confess, did sometimes secretly arise in my mind—of contrasting our present poverty with that lot which might have been mine as the heir of Plas Owen. I had, upon mature reflection, finally determined not to inform her of that part of my history, thinking that it would only disturb her mind, perhaps beyond the possibility of any remedy I could hereafter apply to it; and therefore, though it cost me much to conceal anything from her, of whose love I could never doubt, I kept my secret as much for Carmen's sake

as my own. My conscience, I will not deny, smote me for it, but my reason speedily absolved me for the omission : particularly as I made a silent vow that, with this sole exception, there should be no reservation from me to her, on any subject. .

CHAPTER III.

Work of his hand
 He nor commends nor grieves :
 Pleads for itself the fact ;
 As unrepenting nature leaves
 Her every act.—EMERSON.

I will not say that thou art free
 From thoughts which wring the tender heart :
 The reflex of thy memory
 May haply cause thy tears to start ;
 Thou art so full of mystery,
 I will not scan thy history,
 But let me speak that which I know :
 If gentle in thy thoughts and deeds,
 Thou having sown thy generous seeds,
 Hast reap'd in tears a crop of weeds,
 Thou hast great comfort in thy woe.

* * * * *

But here I cease my minstrelsy,
 Too fearful lest I miss my end ;
 And tender heart in wounding thee,
 Against my better thought offend.
 Thou hast no need of words from me,
 For thine own soul's divinity
 Can lift thee from the world below ;
 And passing through thy upturn'd eyes
 Into the region of the skies,
 Thy spirit can sublimely rise
 Beyond the thoughts of earthly woe.—JULIAN FANE.

AFTER a prosperous and interesting journey, during which I had experienced the utmost gratification

in pointing out to Carmen all the objects of note, whether in art or nature, that occurred in our route, we arrived in London.

I was delighted to find the good taste she evinced in judging of things so new to her, and had reason to congratulate myself on the improvement which her short experience of the world, sad as it had been, had produced in her mind and understanding. She seemed not to consider herself bound, as so many Italians do whenever they go abroad, to measure everything by the standard of Rome, Milan, or Naples: she even did much to enlarge my ideas by the bold comparisons she would make between things she had observed in America as well as in Europe.

Lord Montacute had insisted upon our taking up our abode with him in the first place, in one of the largest houses in London, and in the best situation: a kindness of which I was glad to avail myself for a time, until I could procure what I thought a proper lodging for my wife. It was a favourable thing for us to be seen at first in his intimate society, but I felt that in the end, if I wished to pursue my professional career, I must of necessity seek an in-

dependent habitation. I should require a studio, and for that space was absolutely necessary : besides, I knew that a perfect state of independence is not possible without a home, however modest our ideas on that subject might be. And I was sure that, however I might submit to live on domestic terms with a nobleman of Lord Montacute's rank and generosity, Carmen's pride would, sooner or later, infallibly rise against the arrangement. At present she considered herself as on a visit to one who had ever treated her with the most delicate kindness and courtesy, and who had rendered her services, when in distress, for which she could never be otherwise than sincerely and honourably grateful.

While in Montacute House, for so it was called, we saw, not a numerous, but a very select society of our host's well chosen and distinguished friends. It gratified us to see how much he was valued among his own countrymen, and how much in consequence our own position seemed to gain by a portion of the lustre reflected from his worth and reputation. We went often to the opera,—an amusement which proved the greatest possible enjoyment to Carmen.

For finding herself, as all foreigners do, in a totally new world in England, and trying, as she daily did with great perseverance, to master the language and accommodate herself to the usages and ideas of her new country, she was glad of a recreation to which she was accustomed, and in which she felt once more really at home.

Her beauty, which increased visibly with returning health and freedom from care, did not fail to be speedily remarked. Her devoted attention to the operas, her well-founded observations and criticisms on the music and the performers, and some few particulars of her previous history—of which, though we seldom spoke, we made no secret—contributed to make her known and sought after in London. Many were the applications to Lord Montacute for an introduction to the charming Italian whenever she appeared in his box; and although he could not refuse, he exercised a certain discretion in complying, for which I could not but silently thank him in my heart.

Carmen, on her side, though perfectly courteous to Lord Montacute's friends, as his friends, showed so much coldness and reserve towards the generality

of her new acquaintance, that I could perceive that, after a time, the *empressement* for introduction gradually subsided into a humbler admiration at a distance. I cannot say I regretted it.

My Carmen, although only a poor Artist's wife, had, indeed, the dignity of manner befitting a queen.

We had also occasional musical parties at home. Lord Montacute's own taste was really excellent; yet Carmen was always to be consulted, and her judgment generally determined the pieces to be performed, which, with a few beautiful exceptions, were for the most part of classical schools. Only real amateurs were invited; and Carmen, when the company was small, would now and then take a guitar and sing most sweetly in a low voice such little Spanish and Italian songs as did not try her powers too much. Mindful of her previous sufferings, and never abandoning the hope of an ultimate recovery of that organ and consequent return to her profession, she avoided over-exertion, but succeeded, nevertheless, in obtaining universal admiration for the taste with which she gave the true expression to the words.

We spent many quiet evenings at home; and

Lord Montacute, who, as well as myself, was much interested about foreign travel, prevailed on Carmen to give us some account of her impressions of Cuba. She, poor dear, was at first rather loth to speak on the subject, as was indeed most natural; but when she was at length persuaded to do so, she did full justice to the beauty of the country and the hospitable and kind disposition of the inhabitants to any visitors of Spanish descent. She described in glowing colours the richness of the vegetation, the general content and flourishing condition of the plantations, the patriarchal hospitality of the great landowners, and the picturesque aspect of Nature both on the coasts and in the mountains; but always concluded by saying, with a heartfelt sigh, "But I had time to see so little of it." In fact her poor father's fatal illness, and her own, which had proved so nearly fatal, commenced when they had been scarcely a month at Havanna, and had consequently accepted but a few invitations to some of the country-houses of the planters to whom they had been recommended. Even the few acquaintances Carmen had made were, however, eventually of the greatest service to her. It was to the country

seat of one of these kind and benevolent friends that she was removed after her long and tedious illness, and during her protracted recovery. It was to their charitable help she owed, under God, her preservation from death, as without their aid she would never have regained her health, or been able, after the lapse of many months, eventually to embark for Europe.

By degrees I too unfolded a portion of my previous history to the ears of my wife, who naturally expected from me some account of my adventures since we had parted at Milan. It would be more correct to call it my existence, and a happy, peaceful one it had been until the conclusion of it—the adventures, or rather misfortunes, had, alas, been all on her side. I gave her a full description of my uncle's family and residence; I amused her with anecdotes, I narrated my meeting with Scheiner in London, and the terrible shock I had sustained by the sudden communication of her father's real and her own supposed fate.

I related at length the deep sympathy of my amiable cousin in my affliction, and described in glowing terms the angelic nature of her character

and disposition : but here I paused : on one subject alone I was not candid with my Carmen. I could not bring myself to confess to her, now my wife, the secret of my ill-starred engagement with my cousin. I felt it impossible to throw that blight upon her present happiness, and weakly determined to reserve to some indefinite future, and as I thought more auspicious hour, the confidence, of which I could not conceal from myself the ultimate necessity. I called this prudence : I ought to have felt it was cowardice.

There were still other topics to be touched upon between us—my mother's deathbed. But here, again, all could not be revealed ; for how could I relate what had formed the principal feature of that trying scene, or forget that mother's last solemn entreaties to conclude the marriage on which she had set her heart ? I could only describe, therefore, those last well-remembered moments in general terms, nor do more than refer to Lilith's attention and devotion to my dying parent as exemplary in every sense, and her affectionate sympathy and kindness, the best consolation I experienced under the anguish of my loss. But, as I spoke of those

past scenes, I felt that tears trembled in my eyes, and my voice faltered with an emotion I was little able to suppress. It might be an effect of my disordered condition of nerve, but at the moment I fancied I perceived a sudden spasmodic contraction of the noble brow upon which I gazed, and an expression of pain pass across those beautiful features. If it were so, however, and my coward imagination might alone have conjured up the spectre, it passed away as rapidly as my excited brain had in all probability shaped it; and as I repeated to my beloved wife Lilith's expressions of interest, and reiterated assurance of future friendship and affection for her whom she knew as preserved from death and about to become my wife, and threw myself at that wife's feet in a transport of happiness, beseeching her to accept the love of my firmest friend, my guileless and true-hearted cousin, she smiled, and made no difficulties in assenting to this proposition, and expressed in sufficiently warm terms her earnest desire to become acquainted with one possessed of so much singleness of purpose, and so superior in description to the rest of her sex. Delighted as I was at her re-

ply, which was all I could wish on the subject, and warmly as I encouraged the idea thus formed in her mind, I sighed to think how many years must in all probability elapse (knowing as I did the implacable character of my uncle, and Lilith's dutiful submission to his will) before a meeting between those two pure and tender hearts could be practicable.

After a reasonable stay in the mansion of Lord Montacute, I succeeded in carrying into effect (very much against his inclination) my plan of an independent lodging and studio. By our host's kindness, I had met several of the most noted patrons of Art at his house, and by that means obtained some orders for work that immediately raised my credit to a degree I could not have anticipated. I had nothing with me to show as specimens of what I could do, but a few drawings and small clay models; it was therefore my first step, on getting into my new domicile (containing a garden and back premises, which I was easily enabled to convert into an eligible studio) to model a few figures and groups on a larger scale, in order to prove that I

meant to attempt something beyond the mere pretinences of a *figurista*.

My dear Carmen and myself had been settled scarcely a week in our little cottage at Brompton, when we received each of us a note from Lord Montacute. Mine was to give me an order for a statue the size of life, of Galileo, a philosopher whom Lord Montacute well knew (from conversations we had held together while in Italy) to be one of my favourites among great men. I felt the choice of the subject, as well as the order itself, to be an especial kindness to me ; but what then was the attention to Carmen ? Looking up, I saw her lovely countenance suffused with a blush of pleasure, and her eyes glistening with delight, as, putting the note into my hand, she exclaimed, "*Caro Milord,*" and watched the satisfaction of my countenance as I read its contents. It was to say, that wishing to present her with something towards the fitting up of our cottage, and knowing nothing could be more to her taste than the possession of a good pianoforte, he had ordered one of the first and best quality from the most celebrated maker in

London, to be sent to her house in the course of that morning. He begged her acceptance of this testimony of his regard for herself, and of his appreciation of that talent in which she pre-eminently excelled.

We were now then comfortably established in our unpretending abode ; we had plenty of occupation ; and if we had some cares for the future, they were so far diminished by the unexpected advantages we had met with, that I may say they sat but lightly upon us. I was all the morning employed in my studio, Carmen assiduously engaged in the house, bent upon mastering the language and domestic methods of a country she had adopted as her future home. We still often dined at Montacute House, and met there the most celebrated native and foreign artists in every branch. Among them I was one day surprised to fall in with Melchior Kranitz, who had been at Milan during the brief and brilliant period of Carmen's greatest success at La Scala. I had known him there as a wild, wrongheaded, and rather quarrelsome German student, wasting much of his irregular talent upon trivial and ephemeral objects, and had never

heard of him since. Kranitz was now introduced in London by special recommendation from Berlin, as a rising painter of the school of Renaissance. His manner was certainly much changed for the better. He accosted me as a brother artist, and expressed great interest in the works upon which he heard I was engaged. A little further conversation about Milan, and the various characters we had known there as frequenters of La Scala, and the other resorts of artists in that city, led to an observation that he had heard that I was married to that "*herrliches Talent la Signorina Vitelli*:" "might he request the honour of an introduction to her as my wife?" Though Kranitz was no favourite of mine, I could not in civility refuse, and accordingly one morning he presented himself at our cottage, and asked for Mrs Arnold. He was admitted. We were both at home, as it happened, and as his visit was professedly to my wife, I had time to observe his reception. On her part it was cold and dignified—I might say not without a certain *hauteur*. A few commonplaces about former days at Milan, a few compliments to which she made no answer—were enough to eke out the for-

malities of a visit, and Mr Kranitz took his leave. I endeavoured by a little cordiality to lessen the chilling effect of Carmen's reception, and I believe I succeeded.

After his departure, Carmen told me that she was by no means pleased at his having sought her out, and that she could feel no security in any society to which he was admitted, knowing as she did the malignity of his disposition. I attempted to laugh her out of this, as I thought, exaggerated prejudice, and avowed that I could not see the reasonableness of being angry with a poor man who had had the very good taste to admire her some years ago, and whose good memory did not allow him to forget it. I felt piqued for the reputation of our country as to its hospitality to strangers—always rather capricious—and, as an artist, I certainly acknowledged the force of that freemasonry which in general prevails among the profession in different countries, and to which I had myself been repeatedly indebted for civility and even kindness on the Continent. I invited him therefore to repeat his visit: for, as we were not in a position to stretch our hospitality very far, I wished at least to repair

the mortification he might have felt, by enabling him to spend a leisure hour agreeably—a want so often felt by foreigners in our capital. He was grateful for this attention, and came occasionally to my studio, or to Carmen's tea-table in the evening, as we happened to be at home. He came in truth oftener than Carmen liked, but she had no reason whatever to complain of his manner to her now—it was perfectly respectful and friendly, and he had talent for conversation on any subject, in addition to his ability in his own peculiar line.

Lord Montacute's opera-box was still always open to us, and we availed ourselves frequently of so delightful a resource, the value of which, to persons in our situation in London, need not be enlarged upon. One evening we were sitting there alone, Lord Montacute being detained by an unusually late dinner at some political great house, when the door of the box opened, and who, to my great surprise, should enter, but Lord Corwen, from whom I had parted, as you will remember, rather suddenly at Plas Owen. I was, I confess, completely astonished at this unexpected visit, and rather at a loss to account for it, until, when I had,

as was natural, introduced him to my wife, I could see enough in his manner to conjecture that he must have observed her from another part of the house, and that admiration of her beauty was a very leading feature in the warmth and cordiality with which he sought to renew our past acquaintance.

After shaking my hand, and addressing me in a familiar style, with which he had never honoured me in former days, but which was manifestly intended to pass with Carmen for a testimony that we had been very intimate at some previous time of our lives, he turned rather abruptly to her, and made some remarks upon the opera.

Carmen of course, in replying to this, could not avoid showing that she had a taste and knowledge of music beyond what is commonly met with in London society, and her observations seemed to make a great impression on Lord Corwen.

He eagerly pursued the conversation, spoke much to her of foreign music and foreign circles, and seemed anxious to penetrate her thoughts as to English society, and her position in it. In a word, he made himself very agreeable, as he could do; and Carmen, who like all foreigners in England,

however sincerely attached to it, rejoiced in meeting any one who could talk to her of Rome and Italy, received his attentions in that graceful and dignified manner peculiar to herself, and which I could plainly see only tended to enhance the effect of her personal loveliness in the eyes of this practised man of the world.

Lord Corwen, soon after this, paid us a visit at Brompton, and on discovering the profession to which I had devoted myself, without asking any questions—though he must, I think, have been ignorant of the cause of my altered circumstances—gave me at once an order for a group in marble, representing the death of the last Welsh king, Llewellyn, in Radnorshire: being, as he declared, himself a thorough Welshman, and determined to keep alive the feeling of nationality on his estates, where he proposed to place my work as a public and historical monument.

“I am going into that country shortly,” he added, “and hope to see your uncle and your fair cousin, each in the enjoyment of the same health and happiness in which I left them—if no family disaster has occurred in the meantime.”

I thought he said this with a degree of significance, which meant to express that he had reason to suspect that something had happened which might now leave Lilith's hand at liberty again ; but the idea sickened me, and I repressed it forcibly.

He took leave of Carmen with great devotion of manner and many flattering speeches, to which she replied with admirable grace and *sang froid*, clearly showing me that she was capable of extricating herself from any troublesome position with tact and civility. Before leaving the house, however, he professed a desire once more to look round the models in my studio, and seeing there the statuette of Lilith, represented as Charity, expressed the highest admiration of it. He declared it worthy to stand in any gallery in Europe, and proposed to purchase it at almost any price. I refused to part with it, pleased as I was at his having recognised the likeness, because it was the only memorial left to me of the dear and affectionate cousin whose love I had blighted, and whose life I had perhaps imbittered with her obdurate and irascible father. I could not, moreover, bear to part with the resem-

blance of that pure angel to a man of the character of Lord Corwen.

After his departure, I returned up stairs, and mentioned to Carmen both Lord Corwen's offer and my refusal. To my surprise, she gently blamed me for omitting so good an opportunity of obliging one who was so likely to befriend me in the career I had taken up, and whose taste, acknowledged as she knew it to be in the world, would have been a warrant in my favour. I knew not why, as she said this, in which certainly there was some truth, there flashed across my mind a fancy that she had another reason for regretting my rejection of his offer. I might be entirely mistaken, yet I could not help suspecting that she evidently thought it an opportunity lost of detaching Lilith from my memory; and I sighed as I thought, if this were indeed the case, that Carmen had yet something to learn of the immutable nature of my love to herself, and something yet to understand of the purity of my affection for that noble and suffering cousin. Things were in this position, when I one day read in the newspaper a piece of intelligence that greatly

and disagreeably astonished me. It was as follows :—

“ We understand, from what we consider to be the highest authority, that a matrimonial alliance is on the tapis between a noble and distinguished diplomatist of ancient Welsh family, and the lovely heiress of an equally ancient and honourable race in one of the most picturesque counties of the principality.

“ It is hardly necessary to state, that we allude to the Right Honourable The Earl of Corwen and the accomplished daughter of the venerable Sir Caradoc Owen, Bart., of Plas Owen, &c.”

I was thunderstruck. To think that this libertine man of the world was to acquire a second chance of obtaining the hand of my still dear and simple-hearted cousin, was as gall and wormwood to me : and the thought that it was partly owing to my defection—unavoidable as that had been—was calculated to make the draught still more bitter. There was but one thing to be done to save my pure unsuspecting cousin from destruction. In a moment after I had formed my decision, I executed it.

I wrote immediately to my friend Haydon, from whom for some time I had been too much separated, and requested him earnestly to let me know the truth of this story, of which he could hardly be ignorant.

Some time elapsed before I received an answer, which at last reached me, dated from Oxford.

I found by it that he had been for some time absent from Wales, but that he had lately heard from home, that Sir Caradoc, irritated beyond measure at the slight he conceived to have been thrown upon his family by my renunciation of his daughter's hand, had written to Lord Corwen, to ask him once more to Plas Owen, with what intention could hardly be doubted.

Lord Corwen had accepted the invitation, and as usual had made himself extremely agreeable and fascinating to all who had met him at Sir Caradoc's house. Even Lilith, who had been for months in a very depressed state of spirits, arising from the fear of having offended her father in the affair of our broken engagement, though he never blamed her—even Lilith had consented to receive Lord Corwen's suit for consideration, provided time was allowed her to reflect upon the proposal.

Upon this, Haydon, like an honourable and courageous man, lost no time in proceeding to Wales, feeling it his duty to lay before his former pupil, and now most confiding and attached friend, the true state of the case, and to represent the danger that beset her in a marriage with a man of Lord Corwen's unprincipled character. This argument he was but too well enabled to support, by relating to her, as delicately as he could, the true story of his unfortunate cousin, Margaret—which at any rate she was not likely to hear from the lips of her plausible admirer.

Haydon promised to write me an account of the result of his generous endeavours in favour of poor Lilith, as soon as he should have accomplished the task. In such hands I felt no doubt of its being successfully performed, and inwardly thanking Providence for having raised up so kind a friend to Lilith in a case in which I could not interfere, I resigned myself, not without impatience, to await the event.

After an interval of two or three weeks, during which I had suffered intensely from anxiety which you will easily imagine, the wished-for letter ar-

rived. In it Haydon informed me that he had exposed to my unsuspecting cousin the whole story of the heartless and profligate conduct of Lord Corwen to his unfortunate relative : that in acquitting himself of this duty he had occasion to remark and to admire more than ever the calm seriousness of her nature, which strengthened her to a degree he had not expected, while listening of necessity to a tale revolting to her innocence and condemnatory of a man with whom she had latterly associated on terms of friendship, and with the ultimate prospect of his becoming her husband : and that, finally, she had thanked him with the warmest expressions of gratitude for having constrained himself, for her sake, to make such a painful disclosure. The result was, that she sent a final refusal to Lord Corwen through her father, to whom the circumstances alluded to had been communicated by Haydon. I felt a load taken off my mind by this intelligence. I read Haydon's letter with a sort of breathless impatience difficult to be conceived, except by those who have had to wait in suspense while the happiness of a virtuous being was threatened with the fate of being sacrificed to a worldly and vicious

partner. I recovered my spirits, and became a more cheerful and a happier man.

Lord Corwen returned to town apparently neither gayer nor sadder for his rejection. He came occasionally to visit at our cottage, much oftener than I liked ; but I could devise no excuse to refuse the liberal orders for work with which he favoured me. He paid me a large price for the composition of the "Death of Llewellyn," as well as for a bust of himself, and gave me a further order for a fancy group tastefully imagined by himself, but left to me to design.

I was now more pleased with Kranitz, by comparison, whose talents and taste were frequently of use to me. Carmen treated both with equal courtesy and reserve. To Lord Montacute alone, as a tried friend, was she quite unreserved, feeling most deeply his kindness to herself and to me ; and as I partook entirely in her regard for him, he was by far the most welcome visitor at our humble but happy little abode.

CHAPTER IV.

Heraclitus saith well in one of his enigmas, " Dry light is ever best : " and certain it is, that the light a man receiveth by counsel from another is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment ; which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and a flatterer ; for there is no such flatterer as a man's self, and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend.—LORD BACON.

THE little society that met at our house almost regularly two or three evenings in the week, was a most agreeable relief to the labours of the studio. It served not only to supply me, without trouble, with whatever news of the world it is necessary to know in London, but it also gave variety and zest to Carmen's occupations, and enlivened her spirits without the fatigue which unavoidably accompanies the pursuit of amusement in a great capital.

Lord Corwen frequently asked permission to come to us : we could hardly refuse the flattering manner of his request ; and, well informed as he was on all branches of art, it seemed easy to account for the inclination which drew him towards our little circle, especially as I observed he appeared to take particular pleasure in the conversation of Melchior Kranitz, who was constantly of our society.

Lord Corwen had lately bought a charming small house in Park Lane ;—one of those *bijoux* which bachelors of rank and of easy fortune delight to inhabit, since they find in a limited compass sufficient scope for their taste and their luxuries, without being exposed to the temptations of a ruinous and expensive establishment. He had selected by far the prettiest habitation of its class which was then in the market, and he resolved to adorn it with such well chosen examples of decoration in various walks of art, as should redound to the credit of his munificence as a patron, as well as to his taste as an amateur. For this purpose he had ordered some bas-reliefs from me,—the subjects to be chosen by myself. He had also given a liberal commission to Kranitz to paint in fresco the two principal

apartments, but he selected the subjects himself from his then favourite works, namely, those of Goëthe. One composition was to represent Faust with the innocent Margaret in the summer-house : another, Charlotte and Werther in the picturesque city of Wetzlar, where Kranitz himself had passed much of his youth : and Wilhelm Meister between the actress and Mignon ;—three subjects which Kranitz, as a true German, and enthusiastic admirer of Goëthe, was sure to paint *con amore*.

When these should be finished, Kranitz was yet further engaged to paint a private apartment with groups of Bacchantes and nymphs in a style as closely resembling the Italian painters, as that of the former subjects was intended to emulate the best manner of the old German school.

Kranitz worked with ardour, but irregularly. He had already sold many of his easel-paintings advantageously, both to friends of Lord Corwen and among the public.

Fame and profit might long have been his, had he been content to labour for either with steadiness and devotion. But his genius was utterly averse to rule and restraint : he delighted in art, yet more in

pleasure and dissipation ; nay, sometimes even more in idleness than either.

When he wanted money (no uncommon occurrence), he could earn it : but he preferred borrowing, and I had more than once to supply his necessities, real or fancied, with small sums, that I could ill spare, but knew not how to refuse. I must confess that Kranitz was not ungrateful : his knowledge of the world led him into the way of seeing and learning much that never crossed my path ; and he was always the first to inform me of every new discovery or other topic likely to be of interest to a brother artist, as well as to keep me *au fait* of public concerns with which I was never, of my own accord, inclined to trouble myself. His lively and speculative nature led him to lend an ear to the proposals of an enterprising German company, who were about to take on lease some extensive copper-mines in the great forest of Thuringia : he placed all his capital in their hands ; and after the very first quarter, which had repaid his expectations with something considerable in the shape of a dividend (though but half as much as the Verein had pro-

mised in their prospectus), he came running to me with the news.

"Lieber Ambrosius," he began eagerly, "here is something for you. Trust me, your London speculations, with vast risk and vast boldness, and low, though extensive profits, will never make you rich. *Fortuna, fortuna, mein Herr!* It is only European transactions, nearer home than your companies in the Pacific or the South Sea, that will bring you an income for a small capital."

I anxiously inquired what it was that had raised his spirits to such a state of excitement.

"See!" he exclaimed, showing me a printed paper in German, "here is 10 per cent. for my little venture! Now, Mr Ambrosius, take a friend's advice, or rather follow my experience, and place your money with the Great Ducal Thuringischer Kupferbergs Metallurgischer Priviligischer Vercin, and grow rich!"

The temptation was great: I had not yet, although my hands were full of employment, paid off the heavy expenses which always beset the commencing years of an Artist's, especially a Sculp-

tor's life. I yielded; I invested the whole amount of my savings, £2000, in this best of all possible speculations, and found myself in possession of £200 clear income beyond the precarious gains of my profession. This at least was a great satisfaction to me: I had thereby secured a small provision for Carmen's future subsistence, and I hoped to be able gradually to increase it.

About this time we received an invitation from Lord Corwen to dine with him at his house in Park Lane. Although this new habitation was, as yet, far from being completed, he was in the habit, as I learnt from Kranitz (now an established favourite of his), of asking small and very select parties to dinner, and to give freely their opinions upon the artistic decorations in progress. With the tact of a man of the world, he united at these reunions both the fashionable cognoscenti, who affected to like Artist society, and the rising artists, who were sure to be grateful for an introduction to the class most likely to benefit them. It was to one of these parties, and the most brilliant and *recherché* of its kind, as I was afterwards informed, that we were now invited; and certainly the note in which he

asked for the favour of our company, addressed to my wife, was couched in terms of such exquisite tact and deferential courtesy, as rendered the invitation one almost impossible to refuse. Before accepting it, however, I had an opportunity of asking privately Lord Montacute's opinion of the society we were likely to meet in Park Lane. My true and well-judging friend advised me not to take my wife thither, not at least until a visit or two on my part to Lord Corwen's house should have given me an insight into the circle she was likely to meet there, and the tone which prevailed in that easy and perhaps free society. I at once devised, therefore, some apology for declining the invitation both for Carmen and myself. This would have passed off as a very simple occurrence, had not Kranitz, to my surprise, taken more notice of our absence from the *soirée* than I considered him entitled to do. I could not account for his frequently recurring to the subject within the few next days, till he imparted to me what he represented as Milord Corwen's great disappointment on the occasion. He even sought with some perseverance to discover what had been our reason for refusing the invita-

tion, and I rather incautiously let drop that Lord Montacute had told me that the brilliant and talented class who frequently assembled at the choice parties of Lord Corwen were not always of a character he should himself prefer for the *entourage* of his wife.

Kranitz's expression of countenance on drawing from me this confidence was anything but agreeable to me: indeed it recalled the sinister impressions which had struck me on my first acquaintance with him at Milan.

He made no observation however, and we parted. I speedily forgot the rather unpleasant thoughts of the moment in a succession of new ideas and fresh employments.

Carmen's birthday came round, and it was now my turn to invite a small company to my house, this being the first anniversary that had occurred since we had been settled in our comfortable and happy little home.

My great statue of Galileo, which you know helped me forward in the world beyond any work I had as yet executed, was just then finished. It was to be unveiled for the first time on the occasion

of this *fête*. Carmen's natural taste had contributed greatly to set off the effect of the statue (which could not of course be moved from the studio) by a judicious arrangement of lights in front, and of dark draperies to relieve the marble behind. She had, indeed, arranged the studio so as to form a classical hall devoted to its true purpose—sculpture ; from which all signs of work and other extraneous objects were removed, while nothing but the simplest marble ornaments, friezes, flower-vases, &c., were allowed to remain. Music was not forgotten, as indeed it never could be where the presiding genius of Carmen was empowered to arrange an evening's amusement.

Our company consisted principally of brother artists with their respective families ; but we numbered two or three amateurs, chiefly patrons of mine, among our guests. Lord Montacute, of course, was there, and so also was Lord Corwen, bringing with him his friend the Marquis de Marigny, who was then on a visit to him in Park Lane. Kranitz, I need scarcely add, was with us on that evening, and, by a curious coincidence, met and shook hands with his old rival and antagonist Don Guido Torri-

celli, now fulfilling an engagement at the Italian Opera in London, recovered from his wounds, and married to a noble Siennese lady of some fortune, considerably older than himself, and who, it was said, had bestowed her hand upon him in opposition to the wishes of her family. Among our artist friends present on this occasion, I remember well, two of the most agreeable and cultivated were Signor Fontana and his charming young French wife, an early and intimate friend of Carmen's. They were both eminent,—he as an engraver of Cameos, and she a florid *pianiste* of the Parisian school cultivated in Italy.

Carmen never looked, in my eyes, more beautiful than on that night. She was attired in black velvet high up to the throat, a fashion then uncommon. Her dark hair was classically and simply braided round her muse-like head, ornamented by a large crimson double camellia (my gift) and a small mantilla, in the Spanish style, of black lace, placed very much at the back of the head, and which hung in graceful folds lightly upon her slender throat, relieving the somewhat severe character of her beauty. That statuesque form, that noble brow, those lustrous

eyes, and the pure and elevated expression of her chiseled features, struck me then, as ever, with a fresh feeling of admiration ; and as I marked the tranquil and dignified demeanour peculiar to her when exposed to the admiration of general society, and which rendered her so superior in my opinion to others of her own sex surrounding her, I could almost feel tempted to marvel at the felicity of my destiny, while inwardly thanking kind heaven for allotting to me so fair a partner of life's labours. Such were the thoughts with which I looked at the perfect loveliness of my wife on that unforgettable night ; such, perhaps, were the thoughts of others amid that company ; so thought, I feel sure, one of their number, my friend Lord Montacute.

Duets and trios were sung at supper in a style which renewed our recollections of Milan, and nothing up to this moment could exceed the gaiety and animation of our little reunion.

After supper a prettily ornamented basket was brought to the table and placed before Carmen. It contained a variety of birthday presents, of which the generality were more remarkable for elegance than value, *bouquets*, *bonbonnières*, ornaments for a lady's

table or boudoir, &c., with a fancifully written copy of French verses, requesting the fair lady of the feast to accept the sincere offerings of her friends. Of course a display of these pretty trifles on the board was called for by the guests, and Carmen, evidently gratified by the kindness of her friends, proceeded to place them one by one before her till they reached in a line nearly to me. One space only remained vacant, when my wife drew the last and as yet unexamined object from the basket.

This was a small jeweller's casket, that immediately attracted the eyes of all the ladies present to its contents, which proved to be a very costly pearl bracelet, joined by a clasp of diamonds of some value, and great beauty and taste of shape and setting. There was nothing else like it in the basket; and the superior importance of a present of jewellery, more than perhaps its actual value, made it rather unpleasantly conspicuous among the lighter contributions of the day.

Carmen looked at me with an air of considerable annoyance, as she replaced the trinket in its case. "This is too splendid," she exclaimed, "for a simple birthday gift." Then turning to Lord Cor-

wen, whose name it bore on a small ticket: "I beg, my lord, your permission to exchange it for some more simple, but not the less valuable trifle, which I should more willingly accept from Lord Corwen's kindness."

"It is hard, indeed, upon me," said Lord Corwen, with rather forced gaiety, "to have my 'Friendship's Offering' rejected for the very pains which have been taken to make it worthy of the fair lady whose anniversary we celebrate. I will, however, if she prefers it, offer in lieu of this ill-fated ornament that little miniature you know so well, Kranitz, of St Cecilia by Albano, which will, I am sure, be considered as appropriate to our musical hostess."

"I agree most gratefully," said Carmen, wishing to conclude a disagreeable incident. "Believe me, my lord, I shall prize my patroness St Cecilia beyond pearls, and a work of Albano above diamonds."

Lord Corwen took back his gift with ill-concealed reluctance, but the occurrence passed off without further notice.

Kranitz had presented a choice bouquet of rare

and costly hot-house flowers, selected for their supposed significance in language of gallantry. Carmen could not refuse this, but, I could discern, thanked him with but cold civility, and immediately placed the gift in a flower-stand designed in imitation of a Grecian vase, which had been the present of some other of our guests. The painter had evidently, I thought, from the expression of his countenance, anticipated the honour of seeing her wear it for the rest of the evening.

Lord Montacute had contributed nothing to the basket; but at the very moment the inspection of all these treasures seemed to be concluded, a servant led in, not without gentle violence, a lovely little Italian greyhound, which Lord Montacute, rising, begged permission to offer as his *gage d'amitié* to Mrs Arnold.

A sudden and joyful change of expression in my wife's countenance testified how deeply she was touched by this gift.

"Ah, Lord Montacute!" she exclaimed, "this is indeed a welcome present, a souvenir of dear old times, of Italy, of Rome. I will call him Giulio,"

she added, caressing the graceful animal, who already seemed to value the notice of his new mistress.

Julius was Lord Montacute's name ; and I who well knew the depth and warmth of Carmen's feelings, the fervour of her southern blood, whether for liking or disliking, began to fear, lest the difference almost too plainly perceptible in her manner of receiving these several gifts, should give offence to Lord Corwen, or appear too marked in the eyes of that cold English circle. Her prudence and self-command, however, soon got the better of her feelings ; but I could easily perceive that Kranitz's disappointment, which still betrayed itself in his scowling brow, was not improved by the favourable reception of the greyhound. Lord Corwen was too proud, or too nonchalant to appear to feel anything.

" Well," said I, " we will call your dog Giulio, my dear Carmen, as you suggest. Giulio Romano, if you please ; a genuine artistic name for a dog, whose *caccia* will never extend beyond the studio of Casa Arnoldi,"—as we had nicknamed our habi-

tation. On looking round I observed, not without satisfaction, that Lord Corwen had entered into a lively conversation with Madame Fontana ; so, with a view of dispersing the cloud which still hung upon the spirits of my friend Kranitz, I turned the conversation upon painting in general, and in particular to his own works—a subject to which I knew he could not refuse to lend his attention, when discussed in a company like the present.

“ You have succeeded admirably in that fresco of yours, Herr Melchior,” I remarked. “ Goëthe himself would be satisfied with that beauteous and innocent Margaret, and the intellectual and finely-conceived Faust.”

“ *Das Gretchen ist nicht schlecht vielleicht,*” said Kranitz complacently. “ Faust was more difficult to paint.”

“ Neither of them are every-day conceptions ; and you have preserved the German character in each.”

“ A type of beauty may be found in every race : my eye is full of female beauty, drawn from many

models. For a man, one must select. Therefore for male portraits I prefer heads or busts : for ladies, full length."

This gave rise to considerable discussion. The Marquis contended, that though all ladies were beautiful, yet the charms of some were more fit for marble than painting, like the Jungfrau Alp, of a cold bright beauty—fit for eternity—not for life.

"For this life at least," said Lord Corwen in a whisper.

"Well," cried Signor Fontana, "an artist labours for eternity—as he supposes at least. Could I hope that my gems would last as long as the Jungfrau, and be equally bright and pure five thousand years hence, I should rest contented in my grave."

"What an idea!" exclaimed his wife: "we wish for beauty and eternity too, as much as we can have of it, before we are in our graves, and I hope it is not necessary for that to be made of ice."

"I will at all events try what I can do," said Kranitz. "I will paint, if my friend Ambrose permits me, a portrait of Mrs Arnold in full length, and in bust, and we shall see which will gain most

favour with her admirers. I shall not give my portraits the tints of ice....." said he quietly, *sotto voce*.

A burst of applause followed this offer. I, who knew Kranitz's talent, could not object: indeed, I could not have chosen a better portrait-painter. But Carmen, who had become exceedingly scrupulous, evidently disliked the idea, and sought to make difficulties.

"She was averse to have two portraits at once: she disliked the notion of being painted as an experiment in art." However, I was so earnest with her, that her objections were finally overruled; but I had to call in Lord Montacute to my assistance; and her consent, though ultimately given, was rather extorted by our joint entreaties, than acquiesced in with any feeling of satisfaction on her part.

Further discussion on this subject was interrupted at this moment by Madame Fontana, who had seated herself at the piano, and commenced sundry dashing but well-executed passages, as if inviting an invitation to play.

The Marquis, who rivaled his friend in attentions to the sparkling brunette, immediately prayed her to begin ; she, nothing loth, complied, and we ended the evening most agreeably with instrumental music.

CHAPTER V.

And that virtue of originality that men so strain after is not newness, as they vainly think (there is nothing new), it is only genuineness; it all depends on the single glorious faculty of getting to the spring of things, and working out from that: it is the coolness, and clearness, and deliciousness of the water fresh from the fountain-head, opposed to the thick, hot, unrefreshing drainage from other men's meadows.—RUSKIN.

THERE is something almost indescribably exciting to an artist—no matter in what branch of his profession his talents may be exercised—in commencing a new work. The beauty of the model, the novelty of the composition, the merits of the subject, are comparatively indifferent to him: it is the freshness of the idea, and the energies of his mind which it calls forth, that act as a constantly increasing stimulus to his exertions. It may be imagined that Kranitz did not spare thought or labour from

the day that he sketched the portrait of Carmen until its final completion.

A more beautiful original never sat for her copy on canvass. Simply attired as usual, but always with exquisite taste, and generally with some little tendency to a style which recalled the Italian or Spanish costume, she chose to be represented, as she appeared to her friends, without any borrowed ornament of a theatrical or even a fanciful character.

The sittings lasted fully two months, and were sometimes enlivened by the visits of our friends, who took great interest in the progress of the picture.

I was unluckily much engaged just at this time in executing an order I had received for a fancy group in marble from a rich American, and was therefore unable to attend all the sittings ; but I did so whenever I could, and I thought that the conversation of one or two friends or habitual acquaintances (although in this I differed from the painter, who always preferred, he assured me, an undisturbed sitting from his model), was particularly desirable, in order to draw forth and animate the expression of that perfect countenance ; the sym-

metry of whose features was, perhaps, too regular to be transferred to the picture with success, unless represented under the influence of some exciting cause.

Among the visitors on these occasions were Lord Montacute of course, and more than once his mother, a lady (though possessed of a very cultivated mind, and the remains of great personal beauty,) whose pride and hauteur were proverbial, but who seemed to have taken a great fancy to the society and conversation of my Carmen,—a distinction probably conceded as much to the singular charm and grace of my wife, as to the prepossession entertained in her favour, by her idolized son. Whatever may have been the cause of this patrician lady's deviation from her ordinary rule of distance in our favour, she certainly was most cordial to us, and we were bound to receive her condescension with gratitude. She invited us to her Villa residence at Richmond on several occasions, and frequently alluded to the time when her daughter, Lady Mary, Lord Montacute's only sister, then at school in Paris, should be added to the number of our friends.

Lord Corwen also sometimes attended the pic-

ture-sittings, and was lavish in his encomiums upon the painting.

The time at last drew near when it was to be removed to Kranitz's own studio for the purpose of receiving the last finishing touches preparatory to its being exhibited in the gallery of Somerset House. Lord Corwen, who was already under orders to proceed to his post at the court of —, had delayed his journey a few days purposely to see this *chef d'œuvre* of his *protégé* suspended in all its perfection among the works of envious rivals in the Royal Academy.

Carmen had become reconciled at last to the sittings during the progress of the painting, partly, in all probability, from the agreeable morning society it sometimes drew around her, partly from natural satisfaction at the success of the work ; so that I was pleased to see her treat Kranitz with greater regard and civility than had previously been her custom. This gratified me the more, because I considered Kranitz at that time to be an altered character, and I wished him to feel that his talents were not only appreciated by myself as a brother artist, but also by my wife as an acquaintance of rather long stand-

ing. I am sure that he must have been aware of her old prejudice against him, and I thought it now full time that it should be laid aside.

My pleasing anticipations, or I should rather say my dreams, were, however, destined to be unfulfilled.

During the last part of the time which Carmen gave to Kranitz for her portrait, I could not but be sensible of a change in her spirits which seriously distressed me. I at first attributed this to fatigue: then tried to think myself mistaken; but, alas! there was no mistake; and the few times that my own occupations allowed me to attend her sittings convinced me that she had some secret care that weighed upon her mind. Else why, at the very moment when a woman of acknowledged beauty and talent would naturally be most inclined to appear to the greatest advantage, did the rose forsake her cheek,—why did the lustre of her eyes become dimmed,—the expression of her features at times disturbed, at times so fixed and depressed, that she seemed unlike the same being for whom the portrait was intended? Kranitz endeavoured to animate

her by conversation on various subjects, but in vain.

"Carmen," I remarked to her one day, "our friend Kranitz has robbed you of your beauty in order to transfer it to his canvass." She made no reply. "Indeed," I pursued, "if this goes on much longer, he will not have to finish such a gem as he has begun."

She turned aside her head with an expression of deep melancholy. I felt myself beaten, and resolved to trust to time and a release from the sittings, for a cure to this state of things.

One morning, on returning from a long walk to the London Docks, where I had been to superintend in person the work of embarking my great group of sculpture for New York, I perceived Lord Corwen leaving the house, which I had not yet reached. As he was mounting his horse, he turned his head, and saw me advancing to the door, towards which I hastened my steps.

"Good morning, Mr Arnold," cried he ; "I have been taking a last look at that beautiful picture :—really I never saw anything more like as a

portrait, or more brilliant as a painting. But I was sorry to find Mrs Arnold so unwell that she was obliged to break off the sitting before Kranitz had half satisfied himself that he had added anything to his work of the day before. He is a true German,—labour and genius combined.”

“ You make me more anxious, my lord, about my wife than about her portrait. I beg your pardon, but I must hasten to her without delay.”

I hurried up stairs, and, entering the drawing-room, which had been used as a studio, found there neither Carmen, nor Kranitz, nor the picture. The servant had followed me at a slow pace up stairs, and now informed me that Mrs Arnold, having found herself indisposed, Kranitz had insisted on taking home the portrait to finish it in his own *atelier*.

I immediately repaired, not without alarm, to my wife's room, which I found locked, and tried in vain to gain admittance. I roused her so far as to induce her to say, in a faint voice which I well knew was the effect of illness, that she begged not to be disturbed. This made me only the more earnest in my entreaties for admittance ; and on entering the

room I was struck with the alteration in her appearance. She had evidently been weeping ; but, without rising from the sofa upon which she was lying, she sought to conceal this from my searching gaze by covering her eyes with her handkerchief, and turning her head away from me.

I questioned her as soothingly as I could as to the cause of her illness, but I could obtain no answer. I became more disturbed at this unwonted reserve on her part. I folded her in my arms, and conjured her to tell me what distressed her feelings, by all our ancient confidence,—our early and yet unchanged love. Here she burst into a violent flood of tears, and, in a voice and tone so unusual that nothing but strong emotion could have been the cause of it, exclaimed :—

“ You love me not, Ambrose : you speak of early confidence,—long, alas ! gone by : it was far different in those happy days.....then you would not have left me for a moment, now you daily abandon me to the company of men you yourself cannot esteem.....Oh, husband, you care no longer for me, or you would not surround me with such society.”

Astonished beyond measure at these unmeasured reproaches, and the unwonted irritation of her manner, yet scarcely heeding the unjust accusation, in my more serious concern for the probable indisposition that occasioned it, I replied, trying to cheer her from the unusual depression of her spirits, by saying :—

“Dearest Carmen, you must be very unwell to speak to me in such terms as these. I will not reply to your harsh words. Throw off from your mind such gloomy thoughts, my dear one. Remember our friend, Lord Montacute is coming to dinner : he has kindly given us his opera-box for this evening ; and I see very plainly that you need repose to prepare yourself for the fatigue, even of your favourite pleasure, if you mean to partake of it.”

Carmen did not show her usual delight at the prospect of this, her greatest amusement, and the society of her friend, but merely said in reply, coldly, as it seemed to my anxious heart, “Well then, if I am to rest, you had better go and leave me alone with my thoughts.”

I was obliged to be content with this answer,

and as I really wished her not to fret so as to be unable to avail herself of our friend's reiterated kindness, I quitted the room with a heavy heart.

Up to this time I had been so perfectly happy in my little home, that I had almost dismissed from my thoughts those minor cares which force themselves more or less upon every householder. I had left everything to Carmen, whose prudence and steadiness were such a security for all going right in our *ménage* that I could without scruple abandon myself to that luxury of artists, an exclusive devotion to the study as well as the practice of my profession. For it is not only in his daily toil that the labourer in that high vocation is to expect the attainment of that perception of truth after which he strives ; it is not in the perfection of skill that he can ever hope to reach that eminence which lays open to him that divine principle which will inspire him with the Poetry as well as with the practice of his Art ; it is by deep contemplation, silent musings, and long reflection that he must seek to draw forth whatever his previous education and natural genius may enable him to accomplish. Such reveries were my delight ; they were my relief from more material

occupations ; they at once gave me rest from the fatigues of execution, while they afforded me the happy moments in which I could strike out my best ideas of composition and design. Now all this was to cease. At all events it so appeared to me under the sad colouring through which I viewed my future. That was a day of gloom to me : I found myself unable to go as usual in the afternoon, sometimes with, sometimes without Carmen, to the Park or Kensington Gardens, so easily accessible from our quarter. I threw myself on a chair in my private room, and allowed the day to close over me without admitting a human being, without taking my face from between my hands.

However, the routine of life will have its way. I had hardly time to rouse myself to prepare for the reception of our guest. He came, amiable and welcome as usual, and though he must have perceived that my wife was not in her accustomed health, her manner to him was so cordial that he could not, I was sure, be aware that any thing preyed upon her spirits.

We went, as proposed, to Lord Montacute's box at the opera, and heard, with untiring delight, the

well known music of Don Giovanni, admirably performed. Carmen, pleading her inability to bear the light, sat far back in the box, and evidently wished to withdraw herself from observation, at which I could not feel surprised. At length those sweet but deep feeling melodies which touch the inmost heart by their simple pathos, enriched by the harmonies of that great master,—those strains that seek the soul,—worked their inevitable effect. Carmen now betrayed her recent indisposition by her emotion at those dear remembered sounds. Ill repressed sobs made their way too audibly at the recurrence of those mournful or passionate bursts of music whose movements seemed to coincide with the restless perturbation of her spirit. Her sobs finally ended in tears, which I could not but perceive through all her efforts at concealment. Lord Montacute certainly observed her dejection, but kindly—he was ever kind—made no remark. On leaving the theatre he took more than usual care to wrap her up with shawls, and handed her into his carriage with me, when he took leave of us, ordering his coachman to drive us home, and saying he should call on me early the next day to inquire

after Mrs Arnold. After an obstinately mute drive—dreadfully long it seemed to me—we were at home. We parted silently. I passed a wretched night.

The next morning brought Lord Montacute according to his promise. Finding me alone, he observed that Mrs Arnold appeared to him looking very unwell; that he thought that horse exercise might probably be of service to her in her present state of lassitude, and ended by offering me the use of a lady's horse—perfect, he said—which he had had carefully broken in for his sister's riding. His sister, many years his junior, was completing her education at Paris, and till she came home this gentle animal was at my wife's disposal. I was in the act of expressing my grateful acceptance of this kind offer when Carmen entered the room, looking haggard and unhappy. Lord Montacute as well as myself could not avoid being painfully struck by the alteration in her looks and usually self-possessed manner. With tact and delicate consideration, however, he said nothing beyond an earnest inquiry as to whether she was over-fatigued by her sittings to Kranitz of late, and remarked, that two months'

steady attendance at a painter's easel was a proof of moral and physical patience almost too much to exact from any lady. She did not acknowledge this to be the case, and he soon after considerably repeated his kind offer, in which I unhesitatingly concurred, of his sister's horse being placed at her command; but Carmen interrupted him, and with some agitation of manner gave a grateful but decided refusal. "Dear Lord Montacute, you are too kind, too good. My heart thanks you; but it would be of no avail to me. I am unused to riding; and if, by necessity, I did once or twice thus travel on the mules of Cuba, the thought brings none but the most mournful recollections with it. You, Ambrose," she continued, turning to me appealingly, "would think but of your rides upon the Welsh hills, to which I am a stranger."

"Oh, Carmen," I replied, gaily and perhaps thoughtlessly, "if you fear my distraction when by your side, you must choose another cavalier. Whom will you select?"

She looked at me, but with no answering smile at this sally. I was struck painfully by the expression of silent anguish that passed across those

perfect features; but, mistress of herself, she restrained her feelings, though with such visible despondency that our guest, taking her evident air of annoyance for some foreboding of illness, considerably withdrew, saying as he did so,

“ Well, Mrs Arnold, whenever you feel inclined to ride, remember my horse is at your service. Arnold and I will attend your first trials, if such be your pleasure: in the mean time, adieu, and may I soon see you better.”

No sooner had the door closed on our kind friend, than Carmen, overcome by a host of contending feelings, burst into a transport of grief. Astonished beyond measure at this outbreak, I remained some minutes a mute spectator of the paroxysm which some cause, as yet unknown to me, had excited. At last I approached her, and taking her hand said, “ Do try riding; I am sure that would be the best remedy for your disordered spirits; and, Carmen, even if I am unable to accompany you, you need be in no want of a suite; there is Herr Kranitz, Lord Corwen, Monseigneur le Marquis, would all be proud to attend you, to say nothing of Lord Montacute.”

I uttered this in a tone of pleasantry, hoping to turn the current of her low spirits, which to me were inexplicable, at that moment at least.

“Do you speak so to me?” she exclaimed with warmth; “you who care not for me: you who are no longer the attached and trusted lover of my youth who rode with me at Albano, in that dear country, now no longer mine! Yes, there indeed I rode with those dearest to me, now no more, who were one with me in confidence and love. Dear, devoted father!—yes, and you too were then devoted to me; and well did he, if not I, deserve your gratitude. That Ambrose,” cried she passionately, “is dead!—dead to me! He is no more the same—no! Go! seek her whom you prefer to me! Leave me to my misery, unhappy wretch that I am!.....”

“Stop, I conjure you, Carmen! be pacified, be tranquil.....”

“Tranquil! Do you expect me to be tranquil? You will not ride with me: you keep your rides for the Welsh hills, with those whom you love better than your neglected wife!.....”

“Carmen!”

“You need not affect wonder at my feelings. Think you that true but ill-requited love like mine will not feel—will not rebel against the treachery with which I now know you deserted me for a wealthier, perhaps a more amiable, love?”

Her voice, broken with sobs, refused utterance to the further words her feelings would have prompted; and, as I pressed earnestly for some explanation of expressions which were perfectly unintelligible to me, she gave way again to a passion of tears more violent than before, and hid her face in her hands.

I stood aghast at the sudden change of sentiment in her who was the idol of my affections. It booted not at that moment to repel these unjust suspicions.

“Dearest!” I began.

“Speak not to me!” she exclaimed. “I now know that you married me merely from compassion: that, since you have made me your wife in the law, you care not with whom I associate. No!—you once loved me. I will not accuse you of deception: you did love me; but your heart is false! You leave me to men whose moral character I know you do not esteem.....You think you have paid

me a debt of honour, but your heart is far away. I now know both your uncle's disinheritance of you, and your cousin's devotion. Twice has she refused marriage for your sake...I am not blaming her...she knew me not ; but *I* am made the sacrifice. You, from whom I never concealed a wish, a thought of my heart, have made me a victim to your cold and supercilious point of honour."

These bitter, and, as I felt, unmerited reproaches were followed by a fresh outbreak of grief. For the first time in my life I saw Carmen, my beloved Carmen, on whose calm temper and self-possession I had hitherto relied as equal to her trust and confidence in the love I was conscious of having ever borne to her—I saw this angel-wife, as I was used to call her, overwhelmed by the most unjust, unreasonable jealousy. Upset as I was at this discovery, I knew not how to persuade this ardent southern nature, proud in her humiliation, loving even in her anger, that her suspicions had no foundation in truth. Facts indeed she had learnt, but she drew from them conclusions which were perfectly unwarrantable, as applied to my motives. Sickened at the sudden destruction of the favourite

day-dream in which I had so long indulged—the vision of a deep and lasting friendship between the two dearest objects of my affection, Carmen and Lilith,—a vision whose accomplishment was now manifestly impossible, I turned aside in despair. I was so taken by surprise, or, I might say, so thunderstruck by my wife's suspicions, and at the same time so profoundly mortified that my character should have been misunderstood by her whose true appreciation of my principles I most highly valued, that I stood speechless before her. I had not a word ready to say in self-defence, or rather I felt it beneath me to defend my faith in a question of love between my idolized Carmen and myself.

My silence did but add strength to the suspicions which jealousy had kindled in her heart; she consequently became more confirmed in the erroneous idea she had so unfortunately taken up. How that persuasion had reached her was to me a mystery. That mystery, however, I was resolved to penetrate by all means in my power.

Conscious of innocence, yet equally conscious of my present inability to repel the accusations which

in her blind grief Carmen continued to heap upon me, I was the most unhappy of human beings. I felt now most poignantly for the first time the evil of the mistaken policy I had pursued. Nothing is so mischievous, even between friends, and still more between husband and wife, as a system of half-confidence. Far better would it have been had I told Carmen at first the whole story of my previous engagement to my cousin, even at the risk of hurting her self-love—an injury that would have been but temporary. But the evil had been done; some false friend had betrayed the secret—a secret only because I had foolishly made it one—and probably decked it in deceitful colouring, or given, as was but too likely, an incorrect outline to the narrative. Men's malice is capable of any wickedness when the object is to imbitter an harmonious union, which they cannot trouble by the ordinary attacks of flattery and seduction.

Words failing me, I took her hand in silence, and would fain have pressed it to my throbbing heart; but she indignantly rejected it. It was no moment for tenderness: her womanly passions, her

Spanish blood, were too violently excited to listen to aught that I would have conveyed to her deeply wounded heart.

Yet, before quitting the room, I forced myself with difficulty, choking though I was from emotion, to say, "Carmen, by all our love, by all our early vows, which my heart even at this moment renews to you, as I call God to witness, in full and unimpaired sincerity and truth, tell me who is the serpent, the demon of malice, who has endeavoured to sow dissension between you and me? What more than mortal foe has striven,—and striven in vain, I trust, to place a barrier between my heart and thine? Beloved, give me this proof of confidence:—trust me, and throw aside this groundless jealousy."

"Ambrose," she replied, with a degree of solemnity that convinced me that her mind was wrought up to the highest pitch of determination, "I cannot, even if I would, reveal the source of that tale of your unhappy love for one whom as a man of honour you ought either never to have courted, or never to have deserted. I pity her—I pity you still more!"

I had no alternative but to leave her presence, which I did in a frame of mind bordering on desperation. It was evident that jealousy had taken the place of love, and that unless her mind, by its own force and reflection, or being worked upon by external circumstances, should convince itself of its error, no powers of persuasion exerted by another, and least of all by myself, had a chance of being successful. Such are women; excitable, hasty, impressionable women.

I rushed through the streets—across Sloane Square, along the crowded thoroughfare of Knightsbridge, much to the wonder of the passers by; hurried over the Park, regardless of the throng and of my own safety, till in the comparative silence of the groves of Kensington I found a refuge for my feverish brain, and leisure to try to think. My first idea was to pen the sad tale of my blighted hopes to my ever kind and faithful cousin, Lilith: I would have entreated her to write herself to Carmen, in order to open her eyes and undeceive her mind as to the groundless cause of her present unreasonable suspicions.

A moment's consideration, however, convinced me that such a step would be useless. Carmen's pride would revolt at it; and it might draw down on the innocent Lilith a reply, which, while it wounded her tender and guileless feelings, could have no other effect but that of making an attempt at conciliation end in a worse breach than before.

I next set about trying to divine the author of this mischief: I thought over all our acquaintance: some person in our intimacy it must have been, who could either have been informed of the circumstances, or who could have ventured to betray them in his own perverted manner to Carmen—never very accessible to the tales of strangers.

One only person seemed to fulfil these conditions; one only person appeared to me to be capable of this diabolical mischief. Envy, hatred, and malice were the conditions—envy, hatred, and malice, together with the requisite knowledge of the story were—Lord Corwen's.

My thoughts rested on him alone, and my blood boiled as I whispered his name with the certainty of conviction. My first impulse was to go straight

to the abode of the unprincipled villain who had destroyed my peace, but a moment's reflection showed me the necessity of caution.

It is difficult for an ardent mind, which thinks it has acquired a moral, but not a positive certainty of what it considers as a fact beyond dispute, to submit to the slow rules of prudence in seeking for evidence of matters which seem to require no proof. Yet this discipline must be endured ; and I had to undergo mental torture in compelling my reason to investigate the chain of circumstances which might lead me to a sure testimony of the treachery of my pretended friend.

I resolved to consult Kranitz. I thought this man my friend, though I had no high opinion of him on the whole. My heart revolted from the idea of making Lord Montacute my confidant ; I would not embroil that best of friends in so disagreeable an affair. Much as I trusted his friendship, I hoped to settle it without having recourse to his kind offices, although sure that they would be at my command.

A serious question between two men of rank,

moving in the same sphere of fashionable life, like Lord Montacute and Lord Corwen, might lead to unpleasant if not dangerous results. I had no right to place the life and honour of a friend in jeopardy for a quarrel of my own, however vital its origin in respect of my feelings or my interests.

I wrote a short note to Kranitz, requesting to know the earliest hour at which I might find him at home and at leisure in the course of the ensuing day, alleging, in excuse of my importunity, the desire I had to consult him on a most serious subject connected with a distinguished and intimate friend of his own. I did not name Lord Corwen, but it seemed to my mind, strongly preoccupied as it was with the image of that nobleman's delinquency, as if it were an absolute impossibility that Kranitz should guess any other person to be the object of my intended communication.

I received an answer fixing twelve o'clock the next day as the hour at which I should be certain of finding my friend at home, and adding, that he would willingly have come himself to Brompton to see me ~~and~~—which I was glad he did not—were it not that

he was deeply occupied in finishing Lord Corwen's commissions, previous to His Excellency's immediate departure from England.

CHAPTER VI.

(*Tregarva loquitur*) "Suppose, sir, when Adam and Eve were in the garden, that all the devils had come up and played their fiends' tricks before them—do you think they'd have seen any shame in it?"

"I really cannot tell," said Lancelot smiling.

"Then I can, sir: they'd have seen no more harm in it than there was in themselves; and that was none. A man's eyes can only see what they've learnt to see."—YEAST, A PROBLEM.

I PASSED a sleepless and unhappy night. Early the next morning, I sought to refresh my feverish spirits by taking the air in our small garden before breakfast, pondering all the while in my restless mind the many different results which my promised interview with Kranitz might produce. I was, however, spared the trouble of thinking long upon the subject, for, just as I had summoned the servant to serve my breakfast (Carmen, I knew, was not

likely to appear at it), a ring at the door announced a visiter, and Kranitz was immediately ushered into the parlour, where I joined him.

He appeared flushed and disturbed almost equally with myself.

Beginning abruptly, in his peculiar manner, he exclaimed: "Well, now, my friend, how is it with you? What are your troubles; how can I serve you? You know me, Ambrosius, ever ready to serve a friend. I have known the world too, I have had my quarrels, my affairs at the university, I have been a Bursch like the rest."

"For heaven's sake," said I, "do be quiet: this is no affair of Burschen, but a question of very delicate import, upon which I wish to consult, not your knowledge of the university, but your knowledge of character....."

"How?" said he, interrupting me.

"Your knowledge of character, and that in regard to a gentleman with whom we have been living on rather an intimate footing."

"I am all attention, Ambrosius."

"Well then, to be plain. You know enough of my early history to be aware of the familiar footing

on which I lived with my lamented master and friend, the sculptor, Vitelli; you must remember that I was received as the betrothed suitor to his daughter on my very arrival at Milan; and you may also recollect our engagement to marry, which was deferred only by Vitelli's voyage to Havanna, his subsequent misfortunes, and death."

"Surely, I remember all this well; and the Signora was missing, or her existence unknown during two years."

"Right, right," I exclaimed; "those are the very particulars I wish you to bear in mind. You may, or may not have heard, that during that interval my mother and myself returned to England, where we were then kindly received by her only brother, in whose house indeed she died. Ah! she has been spared great sorrows! But I will not trouble you with any digressions."

"Oh, mein Herr, I have great and unwearied patience when I am about to hear a tale that interests me."

Kranitz said this with an eager expression of curiosity which did not exactly please me. But I went on.

“Believing my early love, my poor unfortunate Carmen, to be dead, and being at the same time devotedly anxious to gratify the last wish of my mother, then almost on her deathbed,—a mother to whose holy care during a stormy period of my youth I owe everything,—I was induced to enter into an engagement to espouse my only cousin Miss Owen.”

“And why not, lieber Herr?”

“At that very time Carmen Vitelli reappeared as one from the dead, and I, with the consent of my good and honourable cousin, relinquished her hand and the great fortune which would have accompanied it,—quarrelled irreparably with her father, my only relation, and threw myself once more at the feet of her whom I have never ceased to love!”

“In that case you behaved as a man of honour.”

“I then became her husband, and since that time our lives, hitherto so happy, have been known to you, Herr Kranitz, and to all the world.”

“Why, then, are you miserable? What can you expect from my poor assistance?”

“All this history was not known to my wife.

In order to spare her anxiety, and to avoid a subject full of painful reminiscences, I foolishly, perhaps, forebore to mention to her my previous engagement with my cousin. This she has now discovered, through whose means I know not; but I suspect Lord Corwen, who, from his neighbourhood in the country and various other circumstances, was informed of the facts, and most probably added his own inferences and embellishments to the story. You must spare me the pain of saying more. My wife now resents this concealment on my part; and although all communication between my cousin and myself has entirely ceased, and though she has never had the slightest cause for jealousy, she is so possessed with the idea that I have married her solely out of a punctilious sentiment of honour, that her excited feelings nearly drive me to despair. Yes, it can only be that unscrupulous man Lord Corwen, who is the author of this mischief."

Kranitz began to speak, but suddenly paused. He looked confused, and then abruptly exclaimed :

"Your feeling is right toward the wretch—the man who has treacherously worked upon your wife's feelings. But Lord Corwen it cannot be.

First, why should he act so? He has no motive; and though Milord be a man of the world—a man who is not given to hesitation in his means when the object is in his eyes worth the venture—yet His Excellency is too good a diplomat to run into a scrape for nothing. *Cela serait une bêtise pure et simple.*”

“Who else could it have been?” I inquired. Kranitz remained silent.

“Have you no counsel to give?” I rejoined, rather impatiently.

“Well sir, well sir, what should I say?” replied he, confusedly; “perhaps you had better ask Mrs Arnold once more: a husband may always ask his wife any question he pleases.”

“She will never break a given promise,” I said, “never. The mischief-maker will not be known through her.”

“True, true,” answered Kranitz, with a readiness which implied his knowledge of her character at least.

A long and disagreeable silence followed. I cannot describe the sort of oppression that weighed upon my mind. It was with repugnance that I had recourse to this man at all in a matter of such delicacy; but it was done. I had opened my heart,

told my secret, and said too much about it, though I had not told all.

The pause was broken by Kranitz taking leave to hasten home to be in time for a sitter, whose portrait he was painting; and at parting he besought me to wait, to do nothing hastily, and before taking any step whatever, to call upon him at his lodging in Gower Street, and that in the mean time he would if possible see Lord Corwen, and give me the result of his interview. I fixed the next morning at twelve o'clock for our meeting in his studio. I gave him the permission he asked cautiously, without compromising my wife's name, to sound Lord Corwen, feeling quite sure that he would not go too far in that quarter. His German deference for rank, and the fear of losing a patron, were quite security enough against precipitation, had that been his character. Like most of the race of students, his countrymen, he was rough rather than rash, and more violent when excited, than bold in facing an affair at its commencement.

I did not sleep till I found myself at the appointed hour in Gower Street. Anxiety had made me so nervous as to the result of Kranitz's pro-

mised researches, that, unable to wait at home, I had left my own house earlier than was necessary, with the intention of walking about the streets until it should be time to present myself at my friend's lodging. Once on the *paré*, however, I forgot my previous resolution, and, conquered by the feverish impatience which spurred me on, I walked with no loitering step towards Gower Street. I need hardly say that I arrived there before the hour agreed upon.

I had seen the house before, but had never entered any part of it but the studio, so that when, on my knocking rather loudly, a slipshod maid appeared at the door, and asked me (on my stating my appointment) to walk into the back drawing-room, I followed her into an apartment quite unknown to me. It was hung round with various sketches of the master's works, none of them finished, but showing great evidence of his talent in execution, but not so much of his taste in the selection of subjects. The maid left me, saying that Mr Kranitz was occupied with two gentlemen, but, she was sure, would see me presently; and I accordingly tried, though in vain, to

occupy myself with the drawings that adorned the walls. All that I remember of them is, that I fancied I perceived Carmen's features and figure more than once introduced into the varied groups depicted by the artist's pencil, and, ruffled as I already was, this did not help to soothe my temper.

Suddenly I heard voices, which I fancied were known to me, of two or three persons speaking in the next room, which was separated from that in which I was by a mere folding-door, imperfectly closed. Words that I could not catch, did not the less convey meaning, or I should rather say, cause an impression—perhaps false—to my jealous mind.

Loud laughter succeeded some apparently witty jest in a voice that I could not mistake—it was Lord Corwen's. My attention being now roused, it seemed as if I heard even their whispers with preternatural distinctness. The other, who was undoubtedly the *roué* French Marquis, said something in reply. I heard my wife's name—no doubt of that: Kranitz's voice I distinguished speaking low, as if giving a caution or warning: I was be-

wildered; I shuddered with the violence of my emotions.

I had no need to listen, I could not but hear: their conversation became more animated, and I now discovered that they were looking at my wife's portrait, then on the easel in Kranitz's painting-room. Kranitz declared that in ten more touches he should have finished the most beautiful portrait of the most lovely woman he had ever painted.

"You will allow a painter to be a judge of beauty, my Lord, I hope? We see women always at their best: for us they wear their most graceful costumes; for us they put on their sweetest smiles,—every woman looks her best when she enters the painter's studio."

"*Bravo, M. le peintre ! vous pensez donc que Venus elle-même n'est sortie de la mer qu'exprès pour servir de modèle à Phidias ou à Apelle.*"

"Venus does us that honour sometimes, M. le Marquis."

"I wish for her in no other shape than this, which you have placed upon canvass with as much fidelity as skill, Kranitz, I must confess. You

have given us all the beauty of form with the lady's own coquetry of dress."

"Hold, my Lord: the lady's idea was not coquetry, but perfect reserve."

"Oh, we understand that: when a woman is lovely as a *houri* she can afford to be cold. Reserve and beauty, where they meet, form a compound that is, *ipso facto*, the deepest of all coquetry—and the most effectual."

"Your Lordship has too much knowledge for me to offer an opinion; but I think you honour my poor performance too highly."

"*Bah! Messieurs: on voit que le portrait est admirable, parlant; enfin, M. Kranitz l'a peint con amore.*"

A slight suppressed chuckle from the painter half acknowledged the truth.

"*Mais l'expression est froide—comme l'originale cependant—Ah pourquoi ne l'avez vous pas peinte en Marguérite avec Milord Montaigute comme son Faust, eh? Comme voilà dans votre ébauche de carton? Eh?*

A laugh from Lord Corwen was the answer to this sally.

“ Pour moi, ce garçon là représente toujours l'Angleterre morale, comme Votre Excellence est toujours le digne représentant de l'Angleterre spirituelle et politique.”

His morality, Marquis, is like a great deal of our English morality ; a quiet way of doing like other people. You will agree there is no mask like a real good character ; that is, one that has never been found out.”

“ Parbleu, c'est vrai, Milord. Mais alors il faudrait naître avec une bonne réputation : ce qui n'est pas le cas de tout le monde. Moi, j'étais méchant avant de quitter le berceau.”

“ We, old sinners, could not attempt that sort of thing, you know ; and here the cherry drops into the mouth of a man too cold or too still to care for plucking it. His haughty mother scarcely seems to disapprove ; the husband sees, or will see nothing, and the most beautiful of women will fall the easiest of *bonnes fortunes*.”

I heard no more,—after a considerable time, I suppose, I found myself on the floor, supported by Kranitz, who was wiping blood from my face. He had found me there after the departure of his friends.

It seems I had fainted and fallen against a table, and afterwards on the floor ; but it mattered little to me, in the state of distraction I was in, what had or might happen to me.

“ Are they gone ?—the wretches !” I asked.

Kranitz, with a look of real embarrassment, replied :—

“ My visitors, who I am sorry to find prevented my attending to you, have been gone at least half-an-hour.”

“ Your visitors,” I exclaimed ; “ I know but too well who they were. I heard, if not all, at least enough to justify my worst suspicions. Oh, miserable world, where I cannot trust a friend !”

“ Be calm, Ambrosius ; you are not in a state to be agitated. But *did* you hear all ? It was only nonsense they talked.”

“ It is not the nonsense, but the sense of their observations that puts me on the rack,” I replied.

“ If you mean that you care for reports.....”

“ What reports ?” I exclaimed, starting up.
“ Now, Kranitz, if you do not this instant disclose to me all you know ;—if you do not at once

put me in possession of the vile tradueer's name....."

"Softly, *mein freund*: I will tell you this, though it be but little, and it is all I know. The world, idle as it is, will always mix up the affairs of other people in the way that ereates an interest,—a false interest if you will,—for the moment. Trust me, there is no malice in the report; but truly the world does remark the attentions of my Lord Montacute to your amiable lady: no wonder, surely, in that: the idle will ask for a reason, and the curious will do their best to ferret one out: and the result is, that the talèbearers put one and two together, and the report gets round by means of proverbially 'kind friends' to the most unwilling ears, namely, those of Madame, and of yourself."

"Speak not of my wife,—an angel whom none but a villain would suspect."

"Indeed, I name Madame Arnold with the respect and devotion I feel for her," said Kranitz with warmth.

"This is trifling; this is nothing to the purpose of my original query. Who told her the story of my previous engagement to my cousin?"

“No one spoke of that in my room just now, believe me, Herr Arnold,” said this man, with provoking placidity.

“Patience!—You will tell me in time, I suppose?” cried I, nettled at his eager manner in talking of my wife, which contrasted strongly with his indifference to the question I most wished to press.

He was silent, and seemingly enjoyed my trouble; at least, I thought so, in the state of frenzy I was worked up to. “But I told you of it yesterday,” I rejoined, “at my own house, and you promised to help me in my researches. Now tell me, Kranitz, if not ~~that~~ wily diplomatist, Lord Corwen, whom I suspect—who else can it have been?”

“Whoever else knew the story, and they are but few, I believe.”

“Lord Montacute, Mark Hay.....”

“Stop, stop, you have gone far enough—no need, I fancy, to seek further for what lies under our feet.”

“What!—Lord Montacute, my friend!—Impossible!”

“Nothing is impossible.....even to friends!” said he, with emphasis.

“ Did you sound Lord Corwen, as you promised me to do ? ”

“ His Lordship, when I saw him alone yesterday, gave me his honour that he had never given a hint even on the subject to Madame, who in fact had ever treated him with such reserve, that it would have been impossible to touch on such a matter with her. And I tell you, my Lord Corwen is far too knowing and practical a man to waste time on mischief for no end of his own.”

This was so true, that it staggered me. Worldly wisdom keeps many a man within the bounds of honour when principle would not.

“ Lord Corwen added that there was no woman in whose presence he was more upon his good behaviour than in that of Mrs Arnold.”

I was fairly beaten. I longed to find that it was Lord Corwen,—a man of whom I never had a high opinion,—that had been the mischief-maker in my house. That would have spared me the deep pain that I felt in fixing my thoughts once more on Lord Montacute, whom I did not yet thoroughly suspect, so great was my reverence for his character.

Kranitz continued his revelations much in the

same strain, half-reserved, half-confidential, for some time longer, protesting that he could not repeat all he had heard respecting Lord Montague; but could not deny that he was very generally considered as something rather more than Mrs Arnold's very particular friend.

Weak and stunned as I had been by my fall, and still more so by the severe shock to my feelings, occasioned by the disclosures of the morning, I felt a weary desire to go home: to that home, no longer as it had been, the home of undoubted, unhesitating affection. I rose, and proceeded feebly to the door; Krautz offered to accompany me, at least part if not all the way, to Brompton, the distance from Gower Street being so great for any one in my then condition. But I declined his offer with civility, and left his house as I best could. The air revived me, and perhaps the parting from that man, whose presence and conversation were at that moment odious to me, had also its effect in recalling my scattered senses. I had need to be alone.

I walked very slowly, and, as I gained strength, I endeavoured to recollect the details of all that I

had learnt in the course of that trying morning. I thought over all our late friendly and unsuspecting intercourse with Lord Montaeute, my own want of caution, the nature and wickedness of that hateful tissue of malice called London gossip, which often creates the evil it feigns to deprecate,—I recalled but too vividly the conversation which I had by such mere accident overheard, together with Kranitz's lame explanations and exasperating admissions,—I reproached myself bitterly in my inmost soul for the weak though well-meant concealment from Carmen of my engagement to my cousin,—I went through all the torments to which such rapidly succeeding thoughts, and often conflicting reflections, necessarily exposed a mind already harassed as mine then was, till I felt goaded to desperation. Just then I happened to look up (for as yet I had not noticed a street or a turning, so mechanically had I threaded my blind way through the town)—and saw that I was passing a corner, near which I could go by a near road to Lord Montaeute's house.

Urged by frenzy, my steps, hastened as it were by some unknown power, took me thither as quickly

as I could form the resolution : and I rang, almost exhausted, at the door of my once valued and generous friend and benefactor.

It chanced most fortunately that he was not at home, but was expected home at eight o'clock to dinner. My passion thus obtained some respite. The butler, who knew me, asked me to come in and rest myself; and, moreover, observing my wearied and flushed appearance, said, "As I suppose you dine here, sir, and it is but four o'clock, allow me to bring you some refreshment. His Lordship will not be in till seven, if not later."

I answered, I believe, harshly, "No; I will wait." The butler said no more; but evidently thought that my excited state required repose: for, without saying another word, he showed me into the library, where he let down the blinds, and arranged a sofa and an easy-chair, so that I might take my choice, placed some books and newspapers on the table, and considerately left me to my reflections.

My situation at that moment was such, that if by a wish I could have returned to poverty, and labour, and freedom, such as I had known them in

my early days at Rome, most gladly would I have made the exchange. Then Carmen, in idea at least, was my own; I had a right to look forward to her becoming my wife; I was unutterably happy in the anticipation. And had I not been unutterably happy in the fulfilment of my most sanguine aspirations? Had I a right to accuse Providence of leading me into a snare when I possessed increasing means, a growing reputation, most excellent patronage, and, above all, the wife of my heart, against whom not even now, in the misery of my soul, could I breathe or feel a suspicion? My jealousy never for a moment inflamed my passions against her; the rage that it excited was exclusively against the world, and especially against him whom I had so suddenly conceived to be, in design at least, the destroyer of my domestic peace.

And when I gazed around, every object that I beheld did but add, in my jaundiced eyes, to the crime, the deceit, and treachery of Lord Montacute. The walls were hung with my designs, my works in marble decorated the saloons, casts of my unfinished works, and models of the various fleeting ideas of an artist's brain, to which my friend, in

what I hitherto considered a too partial estimation of my talent, had taken a fancy, were here and there about his library, his favourite place of study, where he wished to have them before his eyes. In that very room had we often sat and conversed upon works of literature and art ; every bust, sketch, picture, recalled to me some observation, some instance of good taste in illustration of which they had been selected ; his choice pure, his judgment sound on this as on other subjects, the chaste style of those subjects, generally of a serious cast—all spoke the man.

My intimate knowledge of his character could not deny its worth ; so many testimonies of his friendship spoke loudly in his favour from the walls on which my eyes were riveted.

I was beginning to reproach myself with injustice and folly, when I saw, as if lately placed by the side of his arm-chair, the sketch of my own Carmen, in the costume of Lucia Mondella, on that night on which her artist-life might be said to have begun, on the scene of *La Scala* at Milan. The sight of what reminded me so vividly of past days aroused me from what was almost stupor. In one

moment flashed across my mind the remembrance of Lord Montacute's early admiration and confessed love for Carmen, the struggle it cost him to conquer it at the command of his proud mother—his strong recommendation to me, when he knew of my attachment, to marry—the various traits of seeming kindness by which he had forwarded my plans,—all this now appeared as a tissue of false friendship and deep-laid treachery to attain his own particular purpose. All the brightness of his character sank into the shade, his virtues were but a mask, his friendship hypocrisy. I no longer considered any obligation binding that served to tie me to the intimacy of such a monster as Lord Montacute was become to my disordered vision.

In one corner of the sketch of Carmen in her triumphant character of Lucia my eye was caught by the words,—written in my own hand,—“Presented to Lord Montacute as a grateful testimony of regard by his obliged friend Ambrose Arnold.”

These few expressions had, as I well remembered, been deep felt and sincere at the time when they were written. They were true also, for I would be the last person to deny that I had then, and since, and

up to the day before that of which I am speaking, received great and unbounded kindness from Lord Montacute. But how changed was every thing now that I imagined that I had discovered a hidden motive for every kind act or marked civility shown to me or to my wife ! I could not but recollect, too, that her manner to him had been frequently most pointedly cordial, at times when she had thought fit to treat all the rest of her society with hauteur and reserve. How many trifles will not jealousy recall to the most dull and oblivious of memories ! These last reflections were too much for my already broken spirit. I flung myself on the floor in a state of abject misery. I groaned, I wept bitter tears—tears of grief such as had hitherto been unknown to me. I tried to examine myself : I strove to discover if by self-accusation I could in any way deserve the blame of having by imprudence or neglect led to this state of things. It seemed as if I had nothing to reproach myself with ; yet I was ready to believe myself the innocent cause, rather than to admit the shadow of culpability to rest upon the reputation of my beloved Carmen.

Hours passed unheeded. At nearer nine than

eight o'clock Lord Montacute returned from his mother's villa at Richmond. I heard the butler tell him as he entered the hall that I was in his Lordship's room. Perhaps he may have said more, something as to my apparently bewildered condition, which would account for the very extraordinary state of self-possession with which Lord Montacute, totally unprepared as he was for such a scene, met my violent and unmeasured reproaches. The sight of the man to whom at that moment I imagined that I owed the disruption of my domestic happiness inflamed my passion to its utmost height. Again those thoughts which had passed through my mind an hour before, but which very weariness had almost overcome, flashed anew across my feverish brain. I accused him openly of having formed a deep-laid and Machiavelian plot to obtain my wife's affections; I recapitulated all that I remembered, confusedly enough, of his admiration for her at Milan, his renunciation of his suit, his subsequent assistance to us in our marriage, his late renewed kindness, and worst of all, the climax of his offences—the endeavour to divide a hitherto true and united, a pure and wedded love, by raking up

a tale of previous engagement—innocent in itself—but placed before a mind of singularly strong feelings and unsuspecting of evil, in such a manner as to give the idea of a culpable concealment, if not of regret, in my marriage with her, who was now my wife. “No, my Lord, that is not friendship, that is not the loyal bearing of a noble mind : you seek first the humble in station, you shower upon them your benefits, and you seize the occasion which your intimacy with us affords you to insinuate a causeless mystery between husband and wife. My still devoted love to that wife allows me to accuse you of nothing more, whatever may have been your jesuitical intention in sowing distrust between her spotless heart and mine.”

Such were my words, spoken with passion amounting almost to frenzy. I was so exhausted by rage, that I should have been unable to reply to Lord Montacute even if he had answered my reproaches in terms like my own ; but his calm dignified manner, his countenance, which betrayed no sting of conscience for himself, but rather deep distress and anxiety for me, his whole deportment so noble, and his accents firm yet mild, left me no

ground to renew a storm of invective, had my remaining powers been equal to the effort.

“ Listen to me, Mr Arnold,” he began : “ your expostulations would be idle if they were addressed to a man who was not to be allowed the power of reply to them. Be calm, be patient; and if the memory of years of friendship be not altogether obliterated, or at least so clouded over that an answer would be absolutely thrown away upon unwilling ears—which I cannot bring myself to believe—listen while I endeavour to convince you of the unreasonableness of your suspicions, and prove, as I hope to do, that you have been deluded by a malicious tale. There have been others at work evidently who are interested in the attempt to poison your mind against me, designing probably thereby to sow division between yourself and your wife. This is not the moment to insist on the high opinion I have ever entertained of that admirable woman, as well as of your own talents and estimable qualities: it is enough that the intimacy in which, up to this day, we have lived might have afforded me the opportunity of insinuating to Mrs Arnold, were I base enough to do so, the story,

which I knew to be false, that you had deserted—" he here observed a silent movement of impatience which I could not restrain—" or at least relinquished an advantageous marriage which you preferred, in order to keep your word with her against the now altered wishes of your heart. You will believe me, Ambrose, for your estrangement cannot have gone the length already to make you doubt my solemnly pledged word, when I declare to you upon my honor that I never opened my lips to Mrs Arnold on this subject. In my view of such things, it would have been too delicate a topic even for friendship to touch on. But, good God! to think that I have been traduced so far as to be accused of such treachery, and that not out of mere meddling officiousness, but with designs I would not hint at in the presence of her husband, had not he already been worked upon by his and his wife's secret foes to be the bearer of the calumny himself to my face." Here he was violently agitated, but recovering his self-possession continued: "Trust me, if you will trust me Ambrose, as a friend. What has led to all this imbroglio?"

Overcome by the candid sincerity of him whom

I could not, in calmer moments, believe to be my enemy, I briefly related—for I had not strength left to enlarge upon the subject—the first unwelcome communication that had been made to me by Carmen, and then the conversation which I had casually overheard that morning.

Lord Montacute might and perhaps did guess the parties, whose names, however, with high-minded sense of honour, he did not ask, nor did I feel at liberty to disclose. He made no observation, but his countenance assumed a pallid hue, which in him was always a sign of inward struggle: he rose, walked about the room; and at length, with a seriousness of voice which bespoke strong determination, said:—

“ Will you oblige me, Ambrose, by waiting here quietly—one hour? I have need of solitude and reflection after what I have heard: you have equal need of rest and refreshment, which you must take immediately.”

Here he rang the bell, and held out both his hands to me, which I took and pressed with indescribable feelings of joy, as if restored to life after being on the brink of destruction. He left the

room as a servant entered. I partook of a slight refreshment, which in truth I greatly needed, and was then left once more alone with my own thoughts. Different indeed they were to those to which I had been a prey some hours earlier; but still how far from composed or satisfactory. I felt, it is true, as if a load was taken from my breast in no longer having to feel Lord Montacute was other than he had ever been—my friend. But still, the mystery was not cleared up; and in the meanwhile, in my impatient, and, as I now confessed, my wrongheaded desire to fix on some one as the author of the mischief, I had accepted the first name that had been suggested to me by an ill-judging man, and allowed myself to be led to suspect of a vile and unjustifiable design one who had for years proved himself my surest friend and patron. I blushed as I felt how superior to me he had shown himself in patience, dignity, and self-respect. I could not say that my conscience acquitted me—with all due allowance for excitement and provocation—of injustice towards my best adviser and benefactor.

Lord Montacute returned in rather less than the

time he had appointed. I was struck with the alteration in his appearance: he had left me with an air comparatively calm and composed: he came back pale and melancholy. Dinner was served, and we sat, where we had so often sat before, in his friendly and social parties, but with what different feelings! Formerly all was happiness, confidence, and friendship, unalloyed by the least care as to what the other might be thinking: now, in spite of the renewal of our good understanding, there was a reserve, a silence that weighed heavily on both of us, and which I, at least, found it impossible to break through.

The dinner, short as it was, seemed endless. When the servants had withdrawn, Lord Montacute came round to me, and said gravely:—

“Ambrose, hear me; hear me with patience.”

“Oh, my Lord,” I replied, “it is not for me to refuse a patient hearing to you.”

“Well, then,” he rejoined, placing both his hands in mine, and sighing deeply, “it is for me now to confess that I have erred by indulging my own inclination in seeking Mrs Arnold’s society, without considering the inevitable construction that

would be put upon it by an envious and slanderous world. I now see and bitterly lament the injury it has done her.

“ I did love her once, when she was free to be the wife of the man she might-choose. I loved her to distraction then, as you knew. I love her, and have always loved her, in all purity and honour, and would that I could sacrifice myself to be of service to her ! With these sentiments in my heart, how torturing is the thought that even my pure affection and friendship may be turned into a weapon against her by wretches who know not what true virtue is ! Nay, they have been used as a means of attacking the reputation of that spotless being not only in the eyes of sordid creatures like themselves, but in those perhaps of the wise and good. Yet is she safe from all but malice !

“ Her heart, her religion, the depth and devotion of her wedded love will preserve her ! And now, believe me, Ambrose, it is before God I speak, never for a moment did I attempt or desire to shake that innocent heart in its attachment to its rightful lord. You know me, Ambrose ; you can believe me, I trust, capable of such self-control. I never

sought to betray your happiness—would to God I had never envied it!.....”

Neither of us could withstand the emotions of that trying moment. He rose and embraced me warmly, while my honest tears were the only reply. No reproaches from him, no complaints—nothing expressed but pure and ~~unmixed~~ sorrow. We parted. “God bless you,” with a fervent pressure of the hand, never to be felt again, was all that passed between us—Farewell.—Noble-hearted man—true friend—Farewell.....

I was powerfully affected, and went home with a mind imbued with the expectation of some dire calamity. Only on the following morning I received a most touching letter from Lord Montacute, bidding adieu to Carmen and myself for a long period. He was immediately going abroad, and the last words of that letter were, “Tell Mrs Arnold I bid God bless her.”

CHAPTER VII.

Man is but man ; inconstant still and various ;
There's no to-morrow in him like to-day.
Perhaps tho atoms rolling in his brain
Make him think honestly this present hour,
The next, a swarm of bare, ungrateful thoughts
May mount aloft.—DRYDEN.

Love various minds doth variously inspire :
He stirs in gentle natures, gentle fire,
Like that of incense on the altars laid :
But raging flames tempestuous souls invade.
A fire which ev'ry windy passion blows,
With pride it mounts and with revenge it glows.—IBID.

My mind was so oppressed and unsettled by the agitation it had sustained, that I felt unable to devote myself to my professional employments as I had hitherto done. My hand worked, but my senses were absent ; I laboured, but I could produce nothing satisfactory to myself. To get rid of this

burthen, which was daily becoming more intolerable, I resolved to seek an explanation with Carmen : this step, which I ought to have taken unhesitatingly the first moment that the idea suggested itself, I again postponed, till, at last stung by her continued melancholy, I broke the ice by asking her :—

“Carmen, is it decreed that we are never again to be happy as we once were? Is confidence indeed dead between us?”

A deep sigh betrayed her emotion, but she did not immediately break silence.

I remained mute, but my countenance must have shown the misery of my feelings at that moment. After a painful interval,

“Oh, Ambrose,” she exclaimed, “is it you who pronounce such sad words? Is it you who utter reproaches, who seek a confidence in me which you have denied me yourself? I am truly wretched!”

“Nay, hear me,” I replied; “I will not shift my fault upon you, nor will I ever from this moment give you cause to say that I do not trust my wife who is dearer to me than life itself. I only ask for that former unrestrained community of thought and

will which once existed between us, when our hopes and fears, our pains and joys, were but one feeling animating one heart, one soul, one mind."

"Ah," she cried, "we were indeed happy." Then burying her face in her hands, she no longer sought to conceal or restrain the tears that trickled through those slender fingers.

"Can we not yet be happy, Carmen? True we have suffered the approach of angry feelings, which we ought both to have banished from our thoughts; we have allowed the canker of distrust to make an inroad on the hallowed sanctuary of wedded faith—but our love is still unchanged? We have now no cause for suspicion or mistrust—have we, Carmen?"

Still she wept on in silence. I could see my words touched her deeply; but such is the pride of a loving woman, that, however conscious of error, it is difficult to make her confess her fault to a man, and that man her husband.

Wishing to change the subject, and to divert her ideas from ourselves, I spoke of Lord Montacute—of his departure—and said: "We have lost one friend, our best."

"Our only friend," she exclaimed with deep feeling. "No, he is not lost : his friendship will be ever the same to us in heart in whatever distant lands he may sojourn—but we shall never see him more. Ah, how little did he deserve suspicion..." Then checking herself—"Ambrose," she cried, "I will not give way to my grief : you have roused me to speak ; and since I must unload my weary heart of its weighty burden, I promise not to renew our discussions.

"I will dismiss these miserable suspicions, and at all risks freely and entirely forgive you—let us once more be to each other what we were, and bear up with God's help against all difficulties."

These words were a cordial to me. I responded heartily to my wife's now earnest endeavours to restore things to their former condition between us. The time was indeed coming, and more quickly than either of us anticipated, when our utmost energies, both of patience and of labour, were to be called into action to enable us to struggle with the increasing difficulties of our situation.

Lord Corwen finally left England about this time ; and though his visits had latterly become less

frequent, it was not without satisfaction that I found our house free from the presence of a man whose character I could not esteem. Yet he had been a liberal patron both to Kranitz and to myself, and his loss was speedily felt by us in a professional point of view. Several orders for sculpture, of which I should probably have had my share, were given this season by persons of fortune, whom I knew to be of Lord Corwen's own intimate society. They all fell to other, and some not eminent artists.

Lord Montacute's departure was a blow to us not only in that, but in so many other ways, that it seemed as if considering him in the light of a munificent patron was doing him an injustice. So many higher obligations bound both Carmen and myself to gratitude towards him, that our interests, which certainly suffered by his absence, were not to be thought of in the balance with his constant friendship and advice.

In the meantime the expenses, necessarily great, of a sculptor's outlay, and the premises required for his art, remained a dead weight on our scanty finances. The few orders I now received were

small, and did not repay me for the cost, on the whole, of my spacious studio and working establishment. London is not like Rome for cheap and easy living in the intervals between season and season. A bad year in the English capital is a loss very hard for those in such circumstances as ours to make up.

Carmen strove hard, and most conscientiously endeavoured to be the same earnest helpmate she had been to me—but her spirits were gone, her cheerfulness impaired, and her health bore up less strongly against fatigue and anxiety than in her former days of sanguine expectation and hope. We were the same to each other in all essentials, yet in some sense our home was no longer what it had been. Misfortune and care had entered our dwelling, and alas, too well preserved their footing in it. Kranitz had, as you may remember, induced me to make a somewhat hazardous speculation in a mining adventure in Germany, to which, when I had money, I had lent too ready an ear. He had invested his own small capital in the same undertaking, and I, thinking that he understood his countrymen thoroughly, had taken no pains to

make myself acquainted with the nature and prospects of the concern. This want of common prudence on my part was destined to be punished heavily—more heavily than I could have anticipated. The shares in these German mines suddenly fell, owing to the mismanagement of a director, one of Kranitz's own friends, and a *conseiller privé actuel* in his own country. Before we had time to sell, even at a loss, the whole company became hopelessly bankrupt.

During the short period that I had been established in London, I had, thanks to the patronage of Lord Montacute and his recommendation, accumulated a small capital, which, had it not been for this most unexpected misfortune, might have sufficed for our future wants. Now, all was gone, I had nothing but what was immediately about me—the premises and appurtenances of my studio, which were certainly of some value, but which when sold, were a loss to me in my profession that I could not get over. A very few unfinished works on hand, a small collection of useful and, I may add, most favourite and well-beloved drawings and prints, and some models and casts, were all that I possessed

besides. With these I must part ; I must relinquish the dear though mute companions of many studious years, from which I had learnt the more elevated and poetical part of sculpture, and which had helped me to all I knew of grace and elegance in design and composition.

I sold every thing—almost every thing at least ; but I resolved not to quit London, if I could by possibility stay there without ruin. I began to give lessons in drawing and modelling, which succeeded for a time, and I resolved to struggle on until some decided result should prove to demonstration either that we could, or could not, manage to live in England. Carmen, with that strength of character which never deserted her, came forward nobly in aid of our diminished resources. She devoted her talents in music and Italian, to teaching those accomplishments in the families to whom she could obtain an introduction, but they, in the absence of our patrons, were but few.

I did not obtain many pupils. My line of Art was not that of the many. The severe style that must be learnt and practised not only for sculpture, but for what may be termed sculpture-drawing, is

not popular. Carmen's tasteful landscapes and *pittura di genere*, were more successful, in combination with her music, which was prized wherever she was known.

But after a time I found to my great astonishment that she received no more engagements—that those she had already obtained were politely—but somewhat abruptly terminated; and that in more than one family another teacher was soon afterwards found to have supplied her place. She took no notice to me of this falling off, and to my surprise, appeared little astonished at it: she went on steadily with what employment she had, and made drawings, or wrote translations and music for sale with a degree of calmness I could not sufficiently admire. I often found her in tears, but never faint-hearted at her work. I grew, if possible, even more firmly attached to her, and I trust she was persuaded of it. Kranitz, miserable and ruined, was more in our society than ever. He now bitterly repented his foolish speculations, and insisted with a vehemence that I could not repress, upon the fact that he had been the cause of ruin to his friends. I entreated him in vain to spare us the additional

pain which his lamentations occasioned to himself and to us. I strove to convince him that we were embarked in one career as fellow-artists, fellow-travellers through a rough and treacherous world : his remorse would not allow him to listen to comfort.

One morning he burst into my room in a state of agitation and great excitement, for which I could not conceive the reason.

"What is the matter?" I inquired, observing the strange expression that played upon the countenance of this singular being,—always a puzzle in his various moods even to those who knew him best, from the inconsistencies of his character.

"See here," he cried, impetuously, drawing a torn and crumpled newspaper from his pocket : "Ah! my friend! what rascals! I feared at first to bring this to your knowledge....." So saying, he held out to me a journal, which I saw at once to be one of those vulgar and satirical papers that from time to time infect the public of London.

"Thank you, said I; that paper is a disgrace to the age—I never look into it."

“ But you must, friend Ambrose,” he exclaimed ;
“ it concerns you, it concerns Madame.....”

On hearing this, I snatched the paper from his hand, and read with indescribable dismay an impertinent, but yet not legally libellous paragraph, in which my wife’s name was coupled with that of Lord Montacute, in a way that left no doubt of the drift of the miscreant writer of the slander. Thunderstruck, I remained speechless, when Kranitz, eagerly taking up his cane and brandishing it in a threatening manner, swore in German that he would find out the defamer of my honourable lady, and break every bone in his skin. With difficulty I calmed his rage, and persuaded him that such was not the way to seek redress in London ; and he left me, apparently but half convinced.

Once more alone with my thoughts, I seemed suddenly to have had my eyes opened as to the falling off of Carmen’s pupils. If calumnious reports were afloat, no wonder she was no longer sought for as a teacher. This was quite enough to undeceive me as to the true cause of my poor wife’s tears, and to exhibit to me in true but sad colours, the frightful situation in which we were placed.

Work failing—expense going on—without friends—our resources gone. I could not press Carmen to speak upon such a subject, but I was convinced that I had at last acquired the real clue to our present difficulties.

It was necessary to take some speedy and decided resolution, and this I did without consulting any one. I made some necessary inquiries, and took steps to provide all my limited means afforded for an economical passage to America. Emigration was now our only resource. I reckoned my whole amount of cash, after a long day of inquiry in the London Docks,—and found that it was not sufficient for my purpose. My despair was then at its utmost. I flew to our now small and comfortless lodging, and with deep anguish confided to my mateless wife and comforter in trouble, at once my project and its impracticability. She heard me with composure : then, turning upon me those lovely eyes which never shone with greater affection than at that moment, she calmly said :—

“ It is well, Ambrose ; we live or die together. Your plan of emigration does not indeed surprise me : having been already a wanderer, I feel no terror at

the thought of exile from Europe ; nay, I was even thinking of suggesting to you an idea which has no novelty to me. I am ready to go or to stay, as you think best."

Reassured upon this head, I resolved to pursue my plan, and to sell everything in order to procure funds for our undertaking.

At this moment there came a hasty knock at the door, and Kranitz rushed suddenly into the room with a small bag of money in his hand.

"My friend," he exclaimed, in a tone of exultation, although the expression of his countenance was rather that of wild desperation than of anything approaching to joy ; "my friend, your design is known to me ; you are preparing to leave this hard, unkindly fatherland of yours, to try to tempt Fortune in another and fairer world. Nay, deny it not : I followed your footsteps this very day, and thus gained intelligence of your design. We are friends, are we not, dear Arnold ?—friends in thought—in soul ;—one in heart : and we go together, then, to live or die together in that new hemisphere. As for me, I have done : I have broken off all bonds that tie me to the Old World : see, here is the

price," and he held up a roll of gold, amounting to perhaps £200 or £300; "here is the price—the hard-wrung price of my last picture; the last I will ever paint for the thankless public of Europe. Down with your purse-proud Mæcenas tribe, à *bas les soi-disant patrons des Arts*. Let us seek freedom and community of ideas in America!"

"Be calm, my good friend: if you have had the good fortune to gain this sum of money, believe me—none rejoice in it more than we do."

"Ah, *mein lieber*, I see you will not understand me. We are one: I have said it. We are in one boat, as you say in English: soon ~~we~~ we will be in one ship, crossing the wide seas to a land of liberty! Therefore, this is yours; that is, ours in common: we have one course, one cause, one home, one purse. Friendship knows no division of interests."

He flung the *rouleaux* of gold upon the table, and at last was persuaded to sit down quietly and converse on the pressing subject of our departure. Carmen, as well as myself, at first would have rejected every offer of assistance from any one, and more especially from one so poor as our fellow-artist. But he would take no denial; and feeling

that in truth we should probably have greater chances of success by making common cause in all our operations, and that Kranitz,—who, from his vigour of frame and energy of character was likely to be most servicable in the rough life we were about to enter on,—would be irrecoverably wounded if we did not accept his generous offer, our scruples yielded to the occasion, and with heartfelt gratitude we consented to share his means. It need hardly be said that the supply was most opportune, as without it we could not have sailed.

There was so much sincerity about Kranitz's character, that I could not help esteeming the man as I then knew him,—though I was aware of many of his faults,—and there were various subjects upon which we differed entirely in principle.

Our plan was necessarily a simple one. It was useless to think of setting up a studio and leading an artist's life at New York or Boston, where the demand for Art, still new, is very limited ; or of trying the chances of success in historical painting in Savanna or Cincinnati.

We must become settlers—colonists—farmers in the rudest and roughest sense of the word ; and if,

after we should be once settled, our arts and Carmen's accomplishments should enable us to add anything to our income, it must be taken with thankfulness, but could not be looked forward to. To think of art and civilisation now would but add to the poignancy of our regrets.

In all these difficulties, a tithe whereof had not yet commenced, I looked with pleasure and admiration upon the determined character and powerful resolution of my wife. She was even now the first to suggest expedients, to forego comforts, to hurry on every preparation for our voyage:

My courage, I am not ashamed to avow it, would have sunk on more than one occasion, had it not been buoyed up by the cheerfulness with which her example inspired me. Indefatigable in her exertions, casting aside all regrets, all longing for what was now an impossibility, she strove and strove effectually to do her duty in the way that was set before her. She even overcame her previous prejudices against Kranitz,—who, I must say, showed himself sensible and grateful for the change. By our united efforts, we paid every farthing of our debts, and were prepared to start as soon as the

good ship *Rover*, bound to New York, should give notice of her sailing.

I was myself not a little grateful to Carmen for the violence which I knew she must have done to her inward feelings in receiving Kranitz on such improved terms of intimacy. She was endowed with such power of self-command, that where duty bade her submit, no private likes or dislikes would ever interfere with her rule of conduct. I knew she shuddered at the thought of the barbarism and isolation of our future life, and was not sorry she should make a real friend of a strong and earnest man as our German fellow-labourer, to whose useful assistance we must be constantly indebted.

The day arrived, the *Rover* weighed anchor in the port of London, and we found ourselves inmates of the second cabin of a crowded emigrant-ship, and owners of nothing in the world but the tools we were obliged to take out with us,—and a trifling sum,—the overplus of Kranitz's money-bag.

The night before our leaving our poor lodging, which I was in truth delighted to quit, I wrote a long letter to our inestimable friend Lord Montacute. It was partly to relieve my excited feelings,

and partly to escape from the hateful bustle of preparation, that I took up my pen to perform a duty—not unwelcome—I owed to my greatest benefactor. I entered fully into our present plans, but said nothing of our hopes, though he might divine from the tone of my letter that all was not sunshine with us.

It is wonderful how differently men write under different circumstances. Now, had I been proceeding to a country where I had a chance of ever seeing Lord Montacute, or had I been a fixed resident in England, expecting his return, I never could have written as I did then. But the very knowledge that in all human probability we should never more meet in this world, gave a sort of freedom to my pen which it could in no other case have possessed. I felt all restraint taken off my mind ; I could now pour out the full tide of gratitude, and follow implicitly the dictates of my heart in expressing all I felt for such unaltered, such unalterable kindness as we had ever experienced from him, and of which I, on one late occasion, had shown myself, alas ! unworthy. I blushed as I thought over my own hateful suspicions, which he had so

patiently and successfully met, and accused myself of stupid folly as well as of ingratitude towards him.

I wished Carmen to write Lord Montacute a short letter, which I might enclose in mine; but she declined doing so with an emotion that convinced me that she was guided by a strict sense of propriety.

"Tell him," she cried, "that we will pray God to bless him, and that our hearts will remember him as long as we live."

She thanked me warmly for having written to him myself; and I could perceive that this act of mine lightened the burden that preyed upon her spirits on the last evening preceding our embarkation.

The letter was left with Lord Montacute's banker to be forwarded; and this was the last business that we executed on shore.

Half-an-hour later we were on board.

- CHAPTER VIII.

For ages, on the silent forests here,
Thy heams did fall before the red man came
To dwell beneath them ; in their shade the deer
Fed, and fear'd not the arrow's deadly aim ;
Nor troo was fell'd, in all that world of woods,
Save by the beaver's tooth, or winds, or rush of floods.

Then came the hunter tribes, and thou didst look
For ages on their deeds in the hard chase,
And well fought wars ; green sod and silver brook
Took the first stain of blood ; before thy face
The warrior generations came and past,
And glory was laid up for many an age to last.

Now they are gone, gone as thy setting blaze
Goes down the west while night is pressing on,
And with them the old tale of better days,
And trophies of remember'd power, are gone.
Yon field that gives the harvest, where the plough
Strikes the white bone, is all that tells their story now.

I stand upon their ashes in thy heam—
The offspring of another race, I stand
Beside a stream they loved, this valley stream,
And where the night-fire of the quiver'd band
Show'd the gray oak hy fits, and war-song rung,
I teach the quiet shades the strains of this new tongue.

BRYANT.

THOSE who have the happiness to be able to live
at home by their own fireside, no matter in how

humble a sphere, are little able to judge of the miseries endured by the multitude of less fortunate beings who are compelled by circumstances to change their first home for one to which they are unaccustomed. Independently of separation from friends and local associations, which in their various ways influence the feelings of all mortals, there is so much of doubt, and of necessary ignorance as to the future—so much of risk, of failure, or at least disappointment in most schemes of emigration, that the anticipations of the most courageous settler may well quail at the difficulties that lie before him.

What must it have been, then, to such a party as ours?

My wife was the only person among us who was in some degree used to the sea. Having already twice crossed the Atlantic, she at least knew the habits and requirements of a life on shipboard. This was more especially useful to us in making our preparations for the voyage, and probably saved us a considerable sum. Kranitz was willing to do everything, but as ignorant as myself of everything out of his profession. He kept continually repeat-

ing to us, and to some countrymen of his (whom, fortunately for his amusement on board, he had found among a body of emigrants from the Baltic), that he was sure a location in the backwoods of Kentucky must be very like his own village in the forests of Pomerania, and that he was quite used as a boy, to live in a log-house, and to drive a waggon along the corduroy roads of that province.

“But have you been used to fell the pines, square the logs, build the house, and lay down a few miles of timber road?” asked the captain, who could not abstain from smiling at Kranitz’s trivial idea of the labour he might have to look forward to.

“Oh, yes,” he replied, with an air of security and self-confidence, which I could not help envying him: indeed, his spirits during the whole of this voyage appeared to rise, rather than decrease, at the prospect of the various difficulties with which we were threatened: he seemed to have cast off all care from the moment of leaving the shores of Europe.

Well, we arrived at last after a tedious passage subject to all the incidents of a crowded ship, ad-

verse winds, rough weather, and, above all, anxiety as to the future.

That is the hardest trial that poverty entails. The privations, the hardships, may be submitted to not only without murmuring, but with cheerfulness ; but doubt, suspense, anxiety as to the future weal or even support of a wife and family, those are the burdens which well-nigh cut the poor emigrant's heart in twain. Until he has surmounted to a certain degree those crying cares for the morrow's bread, he cannot know a moment's rest, or lay his head tranquilly on his pillow. We staid as short a time at New York as possible. We inquired for conveyances to Kentucky, and were surprised to learn the great distance of that state from New York. There is so much travelling in the United States that means of conveyance are rarely wanting. A fortnight's journey brought us, with bruised and wearied limbs, to our location. Some respectable farmers of the country, and one or two of our new friends the German emigrants, who were going still further into the far west than we were, joined our party near Albany, so that we journeyed more comfortably than might have been expected.

It was indeed fortunate that the troubles of our journey were, by their kind assistance, in some degree lightened; for Carmen was in that delicate state of health that in our palmy days would have received every attention, though now, alas! subjected to the long forced day's journey and shortened night's rest, necessitated by our limited means and eagerness to reach our destination. But, in our present forlorn situation, her prospects of becoming a mother, which at any other moment would have filled my heart with delight, did but add to my other causes for anxiety. We arrived at last at our location. It was a pretty spot, and in other times we should both of us have enjoyed its natural beauties; but at present every consideration gave way to the necessity of finding or making a lodging.

The clearing, for so the place was called, occupied the best part of a gradual slope which lay between the virgin forest and a rapid river of no great breadth. We were told that a fine waterfall (by the side of which some of our new friends were tempted to set up mills, and so remain near us) was situated some few miles lower down, and it was

evident that to these mills alone must we and the other settlers look for the little prosperity that could be expected in this wilderness. There were two other families of settlers at a short distance, by whom the clearing which we saw had been made within the last five years. They received us tolerably well, and gave us an old log-building no longer tenanted, in which they themselves had first lived on their arrival, for a temporary abode. We had also a tent with us, made of the coarsest material, which proved of great service. In this manner my wife was at least lodged under cover, and there was shelter also for Kranitz and myself, with a negro help, whom we had hired with his wife as a maid of all-work, for Carmen's indispensable assistance.

The very next morning, Kranitz and the negro made a survey of our new property,—large enough to have been a fortune in England—in America a mere pittance. I remained at home to assist in arranging the house, and to lighten the troubles that must fall to my wife's share in so new an undertaking. At night the two men returned to our poor supper of Indian corn and salt provision which

we had brought with us, and Kranitz did not fail to give a graphic account of his discoveries.

"Well," said I, "since here we are to live, and probably to die also, let us hear what is to be found on our new domain. Are these forests like Saxony, Kranitz?"

"Do not talk of such a thing, if you would not drive me mad!"

"How so?"

"Patience—I will tell you what I have seen. First of all, I walked through the hollow there to the side of the brook, where our neighbours say we must begin cutting, as it is the only good land in our lot that is likely to pay soon. I had a seramble to get over the fallen pines and to force my way through lianes and briers such as would frighten any of our Saxon Jägers, and at last got to the place. The land seems good—like Wurtemberg land: but oh, *mein Gott!* when will a smiling country like Wurtemberg arise in these deserts?"

"You are disappointed then?"

"Ah, we must take what God sends us. There is fine timber, but who will buy it? Such plane

trees, and oaks, and firs, I never saw for size. Ambrose, we must begin cutting to-morrow round the house here. We can soon get up an additional tenement. We must get out our guns, too : I saw some game, and I have no doubt more is near."

" You were always a sportsman, Kranitz."

" Every German is born so : and for painters, remember Rubens, Snyders....."

" Hold, we have other things to think of here."

" That is but too true, Ambrose. Our chase must be for subsistence. I hear that deer show themselves sometimes in these woods in the autumn."

It is unnecessary to give you all the details of our settlement : we had barely time to make our habitation tolerable before Carmen, in this poor and lonely hut, with only her negress to attend her, presented me with a fine and healthy girl. Happy child, to enter this world of strife and sorrow ignorant of all that is poor and comfortless about it, ignorant of the cares and struggles of its parents to maintain existence in such a trying situation !

Both my wife and the babe prospered in spite of all the chances that seemed arrayed against them.

How many in the luxurious cities of Europe fall victims with all the care that skill and wealth can bestow!

As the season advanced our toils daily increased. We felled trees, we cut up wood, we built additions to our house. The site was really pretty; the glowing tints of an American autumn coloured the woods gorgeously; the view from our door commanded a long vista of the forest, which formed a natural though irregular avenue of noble plane trees. At a short distance we had cut a winding path to the river, where the clear stream began to chafe against the rocks which formed the top of the rapids. This path was shaded by gigantic scarlet oaks, now in the full richness of beauty, and tulip-trees; wild vines and suppiejacks climbed their tallest stems, and hung gracefully from their branches; while through the few clear spaces between their trunks, the glistening waters and the low roar of the cataract made themselves perceptible to our senses. Kranitz was a true artist, and gloomy as his temper appeared at times, he seemed to find occupation for his ideas in studying the new and beautiful scenery around.

A great magnolia stood near our door, where he had knocked up a rustic seat for my wife; and when she was sufficiently recovered to benefit by it, she often sat under the fragrant shade in the sultry evenings of that climate. Its spreading branches were festooned with the scarlet creeping trumpet-flower: and bright humming-birds would sometimes come and seek shelter under the broad foliage, or sip honey out of the deep snowy cups, in which they were fain to nestle. Attached as we all were to the climate and beauties of Italy, we could not but acknowledge that Nature was capable of winning admiration everywhere.

My new care, my little Julia—for so we christened her in remembrance of our true and forgotten friend Julius, Lord Montacute,—throve well under the devoted care of her fond and anxious mother. Carmen's passionate love for this child was so excessive that she would confide the little offices of its toilet to no other hands but her own, nor suffer any help from the negress, who however, prevented from assisting in this respect, from my wife's jealous affection, was yet truly fond of the infant, and who diverted us greatly one day by

leaning over the child's cradle and exclaiming, " Oh ! if Missey were but black, Massa.".....

Frosty evenings now made themselves felt. Kranitz shot great numbers of wild ducks and small game, which were a luxurious addition to our small means. Winter set in, and as fuel was abundant, and the house, after the manner of the country, very warm, we made ourselves as happy as we could. The post came once a-week—and brought us no letters, but occasionally a newspaper. Time wore on. Carmen was now quite recovered, and a most happy mother. Outward cares and circumstances seemed not to affect her in the least. We passed a dreadfully severe winter, yet she never murmured. Always ready for toil, and bearing even more than her due share of it, she seemed to find in the caresses of her baby all the reward she prayed for. Yet I doubted at times whether all was happy within. We had to submit to many hardships and privations. Our resources were not equal to our necessities, having been formed on false calculations, and in total ignorance of what lay before us. Our labours proved to be even beyond what Kranitz and I were prepared for.

Many times I returned cold and dispirited from work, and found my only consolation in the welcome of my wife and child.

Yet even Carmen's looks began to fade. Toil and anxiety, though met with a moral courage and fortitude in which she was never deficient, had not failed to make a visible impression upon her appearance. Her spirits, too, sank at times, and I observed with pain, that although she always received my advice in the arrangement of our little household affairs with willingness, and stirred herself with energy in all she undertook, yet she never opened her own thoughts to me, as formerly, or met me half-way in counsel, as in the early days of our union. It was plain she had not forgotten the unfortunate misunderstanding about my engagement to Lilith.

This was too soon confirmed to me. A traveller from Boston to New Orleans—a most unusual sight in our wilderness—passed by our hamlet. He lodged with one of our neighbours, and, fatigued and indisposed, was constrained to rest two days before renewing his journey.

We had been enabled to supply him with some

little mess of meal or porridge, when there happened to be nothing at hand in the hut where he was lodged ; and in return for this trifling service, the traveller on departing left with us a bundle of English newspapers that had arrived at Boston but the day before he quitted it. This was a most acceptable present, and one which served to beguile many a long winter's evening, when we were thrown on our own resources for amusement. The contrast between our own sad plight and the brilliant civilisation of Europe gave a greater zest to the accounts we read of the quarter of the world which we had but lately left, and the dissertations on art, galleries, music, &c., furnished us with much of interest to all our party. Kranitz, with great glee, found that a painting of his had been sold to an amateur for twice the miserable pittance he had been obliged to accept for it from a dealer in Newport Street ; and Carmen was roused to a degree of more than usual liveliness by the announcement, in a paragraph headed " Prospects of the Opera for 18—," that it was currently reported in the musical world that a famous opera, called "*I Promessi Sposi*," by the celebrated Maestro Feliciani, &c., was in contempla-

tion to be brought out by the manager in the course of the next season.

Nothing in this mass of intelligence came home to me—till, on looking over some of the papers a second time, I found a paragraph headed “EARL OF MONTACUTE.—This distinguished nobleman, who has been absent from England nearly a twelve-month, has been heard of at Corfu, on his way to join the patriotic rising lately commenced in the Greek provinces of Turkey. His Lordship’s well-known classical sympathies have doubtless engaged his energies in the noble cause of Grecian independence.”

Knowing the ardent devotion of that earnest man to any object he took up, I had not a doubt but Lord Montacute would devote life and fortune to a cause which must so strongly enlist his feelings in its favour. His fondness for the great names and arts of antiquity had always, as I knew, made Greece a land of the highest interest to him: indeed his travels in Italy had been but a preparation for a journey to Athens. I felt sure that he would dare everything for so sacred a cause. But what a pang it gave me to think of the involuntary share

our ill-starred destinies might have had in this present determination.

Carmen, too, felt deeply that we had been partly the cause of estranging from his native land a man so well fitted to do it honour. But it was of no use now to waste ourselves in vain regrets : we could only bow our heads and submit. This, however, was not the only important news which we discovered in our file of newspapers. In looking over the obituary, we saw the death of my Welsh uncle, Sir Caradoc Owen, at the age of seventy-two—with a few lines to say that it was the effect of gout, and that he had left his daughter heiress to all his fortune. This intelligence did not fail to rouse a host of conflicting and painful reminiscences in my mind ; and as I could not communicate my thoughts on that subject to my wife, I was left to brood over them in silence. Oh ! what misery is want of confidence—entire confidence—between those whose happiness ought to consist in perfect, reciprocal trust !

Of course, this announcement did not escape Carmen ; but she made no observation on it. She evidently wished me to speak : as if conscious of a new and unaccustomed reserve towards me herself, she

did not now dare to invite me to disclose my inward thoughts to her. I opened the subject.

"You see, my dear," I said, "there is a change in my family. I cannot pretend to feel much grieved at the loss, but I can feel for her whose kind and affectionate heart will be stricken with a severe, if not unexpected blow."

"Your cousin you mean?"

Certainly; and I must write to poor Lilith by the next opportunity, to express, at least, what I cannot help feeling for her in her new situation."

"Do not, I conjure you, write to her.....to your cousin I mean."

"Why not?—Is it not the most simple and natural thing to do on such an occasion as this?—What reason can there be against it?"

"I beg this of you," she cried.

"But why, Carmen—why, in the name of goodness, should I not from this howling wilderness pour forth the natural feelings of my heart to a cousin, the nearest relation I have in the world..... the only one?"

"Pray do not.....pray.....pray!"

Carmen insisted so long upon this point, and ex-

plained to me with such earnestness that she should be still more wretched if I did so, than she already was, with all her growing cares—that I gave way. I could not bear to see the misery to which she would certainly abandon herself in ease of my refusal. My heart misgave me, however. I felt conscious of unkindness towards my early friend and once dearly beloved Lilith;—but I yielded—and bitter was the remorse I afterwards felt for not having written to her, as I ought at once to have done.

Time wore on insensibly; and the constant labour of our lives barely sufficed to provide for our necessities: there was little leisure for thought when we returned from our daily toil,—and memory, if remorseful in its regret, was more generally absorbed in the pressing and tangible realities that surrounded us.

One memorable day, I chanced to be out with Kranitz in a forest-glade, not very far from our habitation, but separated from it by a rising ground, upon which the thickest and most densely matted jungle, combined with lofty trees to conceal it from our sight.

Carmen was occupied at a little distance from us in the meadow where our cows were feeding, busied in some of the necessary occupations of the dairy, which ordinarily fell to her lot.

Suddenly the sky became overcast, and a violent hurricane was evidently approaching: peals of thunder, first distant, then nearer, fell upon our ears, and one violent crash, simultaneous with a vivid flash of lightning, roused us all to a sense of imminent danger.

Fortunate, indeed, that it was so; for, as we each pursued the nearest path that led towards the house, a heartrending scene presented itself. Flames issued from the roof of our dwelling, which we had left in such fancied security—clouds of smoke met us as we approached, and partly blinded us. The impulse of the moment made us all rush forward, and we found ourselves together on the spot.

Carmen, in an agony of despair, endeavoured to force her way into the burning building to the upper chamber, where she had left her infant in the care of the negress, before the flames should have seized upon the part where it lay. With the thrilling cry of "My child! my child!" she darted into

the narrow passage, by which a rough flight of steps gave access to the single room above.

I saw her form, surrounded by the burning flames and blinding smoke, totter, and then fall at the foot of the staircase. Maddened by this spectacle, with the strength inspired by despair, I jumped over the burning logs; and, seizing her in my arms, bore her back from what in another instant must have proved certain destruction; while Kranitz, apparently endowed with superhuman energy at that frantic cry, sprang upon a projecting beam, and gained the upper window, where we lost sight of him among the rolls of smoke and flame which issued from it. A moment more, and we saw him reappear at the aperture, with the baby in his arms. It was but too evident, however, that the fire was rapidly gaining ground: burning rafters fell on all sides of us, as we rushed to the foot of the wall to receive from the hands of our brave companion our dearest of all treasures. He had, with wonderful presence of mind, wrapped the child in his own rough and almost incombustible jacket, and succeeded in lowering her carefully into our arms below. Alas! we had not time to feel our joy. At

the very instant when he was preparing to spring from the window, the roof, which was framed with beams of cedar and shingles of pitch-pine, the most highly inflammable timber of the country, suddenly fell in, carrying with it the already half-burnt passage and staircase where Carmen had stood, and burying the unfortunate Kranitz under a mass of fiery ruins.

With the utmost difficulty and hazard, our negro and myself succeeded in extricating this victim of courage and devotion from beneath the blazing pile. He was still alive, but in such a state of suffering from external and internal injury, besides the effects of fire, as to make it evident that he could not long survive. We hastily arranged some tarpaulins and canvass sacks in one of the outhouses on the other side of the yard, so as to make a place fit to receive him, and conveyed him as carefully as possible thither.

Carmen, having laid her babe in safety, flew for some water, and leaned over him, bathing his temples, and calling him from time to time her deliverer, the deliverer of her child, who would be ever dear to her.

The poor sufferer replied only by deep groans, and ineffectual efforts to speak, though unable to articulate intelligibly. At length he recovered sufficiently to utter distinctly a few words—wild, broken words,—prayers for pardon and forgiveness. “Forgive you! dearest Kranitz, what have we to forgive?” I exclaimed; “you, our tried and faithful friend! you, the preserver of our child!”

“Bless you! God ever bless you!” murmured Carmen convulsively, as she knelt weeping beside him.

He raised his eyes to her face. I shall never forget their wild and passionate expression, as he cried cagerly, “Say that again! say that but once again! But no! cold, cruel woman! you will never again repeat those blessed words, when you hear what I have to tell you....*Ach—ach—Gott!*” A few more incoherent words in German were all he uttered for some time, till Carmen, having given him a drop of brandy mingled with some water, fanned his heated temples with a bough, which seemed in some measure to relieve him.

“Ach, Ambrose!” he gasped forth, “she is too good to a wretch like me.....I am a sinner towards

God and man!—towards you, Ambrose—towards your angel-wife! 'Twas I, and none other, that made all the mischief between you.....I loved her once: that you knew.....I have loved her since constantly and passionately.....*Ach, Gott!*..... Yes, I have done all the wrong." He paused from excessive exhaustion, and the silence was only interrupted by the deep gasps of the miserable man, who I thought each instant would have expired, through the intensity of his agony. Astonished, and painfully interested by his confession, and stung to the quick as I was by his wild words, I yet exerted myself to forget that he was other than the suffering mortal to whom I was bound to show the last offices of humanity.

"Kranitz, I am your friend: go on. Say what you please. God is our judge!";

"Ach! Gott is our judge: that is my fear...you are and ever have been my friend. Well, time remains not...I told your wife all I had learnt from Lord Corwen of your intended marriage to a cousin....I knew her not, but I made a false tale of it.... a romantic story.....that you preferred the fair-haired English girl, and only married Signora

Vitelli from a forced feeling of honour...good faith, perhaps—not love. I knew her well to whom I spoke....her woman's jealousy took in all my base, fiend-like insinuations.....good as an angel herself, she yet listened to me, a devil!....."

There was a pause. I dared not look at my wife, yet I could hear by her suppressed sobs how powerfully she was affected by his words.

With increased difficulty, he resumed :—" I had her promise not to betray me as the person who gave her this information : I bound her to secrecy. Well I knew she would keep her word. My deep-laid plan prospered, if not wholly, at least in part : it drove the hated Montacute from her side. You remember, Ambrose, that morning you came to my house : 'twas I contrived you should overhear the conversation with Lord Corwen and the Marquis *à propos* to Lord Montacute : they were my tools, those wild men of pleasure : I enjoyed, I revelled in the calumny : 'twas I that gave it shape and published it to the world : envious myself, I gladly saw even the lying tale of favour to another gain ground upon your jealous fears. I was indeed wicked, malicious in the extreme. I failed : yet I

apparently succeeded. I gained nothing, but I destroyed the happiness of you both. I followed you here: if I have helped you in the wilderness, 'twas but to be near her. I had given up hope, yet I lived on in my delusions. I could not bear existence elsewhere. I had worshipped your wife. She treated me with constant coldness, and for her, cruel and disdainful as she is, I now die. Yes, I die in the thought of having saved her and her child; and I die happier in that thought of thus in some degree atoning for my calumnies, than I ever was when in my delusion I vainly imagined that I had succeeded in my course of falsehood.....succeeded in wounding her fair fame, and ruining her prospects in life as its necessary consequence. Such has been my sin.....great and terrible it now appears. O, God, I have not time for repentance.....Forgive...forgive."

The wretched man turned convulsively to the side where Carmen knelt, trying in vain to soothe his dying agonies, and fixing his dim eyes upon those lustrous and beneficent orbs, now beaming upon him with the gratitude and compassion which only

a mother's heart could inspire, he whispered hoarsely, "Carmen, can you, will you forgive me?"

She bent her head over him—words failed her, and deep sobs shook her frame, but the kiss of pardon and peace she impressed upon his brow must have been intelligible even at that dark moment of doubt and anguish ; for, raising himself by a last but powerful effort, he placed her hand upon his scorched and wounded breast, and in a moment more, still muttering the words, forgive, forgive, fell back, and expired.

Over this melancholy and awful catastrophe I would willingly have drawn a veil, but it is necessary to the course of my history.

That night, forlorn and terrible as it was, is yet sanctified in my remembrance by the entire and complete explanation with my wife, which followed closely upon this afflicting scene. She, now released from her promise, gave me a full account of the long train of calumny and deceit by which she had been imposed upon ; and I, on my part, on reviewing the past, could not but recollect a variety of circumstances which confirmed but too fatally Kranitz's confession of guilt and treachery towards

us. We could not but sigh in silence over the frailty of human nature; and then, united once again in perfect confidence, we turned to the work which the urgent calls of the moment imperatively required of us.

The first thing to be done was to patch up an habitation. In a country of forests, that was not so difficult; and as all our tools were not in the house at the time of the fire, since it had occurred in daytime, while they were in use, we were able to set about constructing a log-hut immediately. The late event, besides the destruction of our little property, and the gloom which it threw over all our thoughts, had deprived us of our best arm in the death of Kranitz. There remained none but Phœbus the negro and myself, who could do any work. However, the season was fine, and with wood in plenty, and some old sailcloth and tarpaulins, in which some of our now lost goods had been packed on the voyage, we contrived to put together a cabin for my wife and her child. Our stores of corn, and a few other articles of provision, were out of the way of the fire. The neighbours, of whom in general we saw but little, were kind to

us on this occasion ; much more so than from their usual rough manners and blunted sensibilities we could have expected. Indeed the difficulties of life in the backwoods are so great and so obvious, that none but the most hardhearted and least civilized of men could refuse to lend assistance to a fellow-settler suffering under such an affliction.

We buried poor Kranitz as decently as we could in a glade of the forest which he had been wont to admire for its picturesque beauty, and of which he had made rough sketches upon coarse paper with a carpenter's lead. An umbrageous tulip-tree spread its arms over the grave, which we protected from the wolves by heaping over it a cairn of stones.

Our second home in these wilds was at last constructed, and we lived in it but badly. My wife's health suffered, as might be expected, from care and anxiety : the ague, that *malaria* of the northern continent, attacked her, and reduced her strength rapidly.

Shocked as she had been by the confession of our late miserable companion, she yet acquired this consolation from it, that she could look on me with greater confidence, and listen to the history of my

past life, upon which I now entered unreservedly, giving the full detail of my residence in my late uncle's family, without impatience.

Her jealousy of Lilith at last relented to the point that I ventured once again to suggest to her the propriety of my writing to say that we had heard of Sir Caradoc's death, and that I, at least, still felt a natural interest in her welfare.

The letter was written and sent. In penning it, I found myself unavoidably drawn to say something of our present life and circumstances; and to do so with truth, I could not conceal much of our actual desolate and forlorn condition. Carmen's pride certainly suffered not a little, but she yielded; the step was taken, and I trusted she would feel more composed after it, as I unquestionably did. And then we kissed our little Julia, and turned with prayer to God once more to our daily labour.

Four months—four melancholy months—elapsed. We knew that if we were to receive an answer, it could hardly arrive under that period; but our situation in the meantime had become each day more deplorable, and we were beginning to despair, when, one evening, I got notice that the steamer on the

river had left at the nearest town—many miles distant—a parcel directed to me. Doubting whether this could be really the case, I nevertheless resolved to go and fetch it myself, or at least to satisfy my own mind on the subject. Even doubt where there is a chance of success, is hardly an unpleasant feeling.

A fine winter's day took me to the rapids, where I was sure to find fishermen, and probably a boat. Phœbus wanted to go instead of me, but I could trust none but myself on such an errand. I found a man preparing to start with a small catch of fish to the town: I jumped into his canoe, and, passing the rapids, we soon got into the great stream below.

Arrived at the town, I ran to the post-office, and found—no parcel or package of any sort directed to me. Disappointed beyond measure, I begged for another search, and at length was brought out, no parcel indeed, but the longed-for letter addressed to me in the common form.

This I claimed and carried off (in a state of happiness not easily to be conceived except by those who have been similarly situated), to a steamer, on

the point of starting up the river, which would land me at a station whence there were roads and occasional lifts to be had in the direction of our clearing.

I could not of course commence the reading of this treasured letter on board a boat crowded with rough and noisy people ; I therefore folded it up carefully in my pocket-book, and reserved it to peruse with Carmen when I got home. How long that day's journey seemed to me ! I did not reach our poor log-house till very late, and found my wife very anxious at my delay. In spite of the contradictory nature of her feelings, she could not but rejoice to learn that my journey had not been in vain. The letter was produced, and, deeply moved, I read, in the well-known handwriting of my cousin, kind words to which I had been long a stranger.

After assuring me that our long separation had not lessened the sympathy which, as a cousin, she should always feel for me and my interests, Lilith proceeded to give me an account of her father's death. She expressed her grief that he had not,

even at the last, relented towards me, and that he had made no mention of me in his will.

Considering me now, therefore, as her nearest relation, and in consequence of this neglect on the part of my uncle possessing an undoubted claim upon herself, she begged me to come without loss of time to England, and to bring my wife and child at once to Plas Owen. That, she emphatically declared, should be our home whenever we pleased, although she was at that moment taking steps that would place me in a situation to provide us with an independent habitation, if we preferred it. And, as if this were not a sufficient earnest of her angelic kindness, she had enclosed a short and most affectionate letter to Carmen, telling her she was already dear to her as my wife, and bidding her, in anticipation, welcome to Plas Owen.

Further, there was notice that I should find at an English banker's in New York ample means for our voyage home.

Carmen was quite overcome by the reading of this generous and noble-minded epistle. In spite of all prejudice, her heart was too good not to ac-

knowledge the injustice with which she had previously regarded my amiable cousin; but when she heard the welcome to Plas Owen, she sighed mournfully, and silent tears fell upon the paper she held in her trembling hands, as if her heart foreboded those old walls could never contain a welcome for her. She seemed overwhelmed, in spite of her gratitude and admiration of Lilith's disinterested kindness, by a fatal and melancholy presentiment.

She struggled hard, however, with her depression, and set to work in earnest to assist me in all the arrangements necessary for our departure. In our forlorn condition, you may imagine that we lost as little time in preparation as we could help.

The winter was approaching, and we made all haste to New York. We found the money lodged for us there to be even more than sufficient, and having supplied ourselves amply with all necessaries, we sailed with the first packet in the spring for Liverpool.

CHAPTER IX.

Bello es vivir ! la vida es la armonia,
 Luz, penascos, torrentes y cascadas,
 Un sol de fuego iluminando el dia,
 Aire de aromas, flores apiñadas.

* * * *

Bello es vivir ! se ve en el horizonte
 Asoma al crepúsculo que nace ;
 Y la neblina que corona el monte
 En el aire flotando se deshace.

Y el inmenso tapiz del firmamento
 Cambia su azul en franjas de colores,
 Y susurran las hojas en el viento
 Y desatan su voz los ruisñores.

* * * *

Bello es vivir ! se siente en la memoria
 El recuerdo bullir de lo pasado ;
 Camina cada ser con una historia
 De encantos y placeres que ha gozado.

DON JOSÉ ZORRILLA.

AFTER a prosperous voyage across the Atlantic, we arrived at Liverpool. The hard life we had been

so long leading made the rest we enjoyed on ship-board doubly grateful, and my desire to revisit Plas Owen increased almost painfully. Carmen's great anxiety to bring her child safe to its future home had so completely overcome all other feelings, that I believe her otherwise natural reluctance to meet Lilith was entirely obliterated. The journey—from Liverpool where we landed—was not long, while the country was quite new to her, and so different from any part of England she had ever seen, that her thoughts were agreeably distracted by a variety of objects from the less pleasant anticipations that might have disturbed her. To me, the well-known hills and woods as we approached them, did but speak too plainly of times gone by—of hopes and sorrows—which at that moment seemed to arise before me with all the power and distinctness stamped so indelibly on the recollections of our earlier years. My heart throbbed violently as I drew near to that home which had received me with the warmest hospitality, and had expelled me with the cruelest disdain. I could not but recall the image of my old uncle—peace to his troubled soul—and with all charity for his unkindness, I could not

but confess that I was likely to be more tranquil at Plas Owen, under present circumstances, than in his days I could ever have been. The thought of seeing my cousin troubled me: well though I knew she could not be unlike her own dear self, and that the possession of wealth and independence would make no change in her—but the expectation of meeting a woman one has loved, and by whom one has been beloved, is at all times, to a man of feeling, rather a nervous sensation. In the last few hours of that journey I lived years over again, I recollected things long forgotten, as well as if they had occurred but recently, and I fell into a dreamy reverie, from which I was only awakened by the carriage at last stopping at the gates of Plas Owen.

This roused me at once. A sense of the novelty of my situation, and of the necessity of recovering my composure, so as to present my wife and child to my cousin, without betraying the emotion that I inwardly felt gaining ground upon me, gave me strength, courage I can hardly call it, for I knew not what I did. The well-known hall, the liveries, the good old butler who welcomed me as the Mr Ambrose of former times, Lilith's favourite flowers,

which were in their accustomed places, decorating the vestibule, all spoke to me of past days, in those "words without sound" that never fail to find their way to the heart, unless that heart be of stone.

The gentle pressure of Carmen's arm, and the soft cheek of little Julia as she leant upon my shoulder, recalled me to the world I was in, and spoke volumes to prove that time had passed with no lingering step since I last looked upon Lilith in those halls.

Carmen kept her self-possession admirably.

Lilith met us at the door of the vestibule. Her reception was most kind and affectionate. She took Carmen's hand and mine at the same moment, and pressed them together in both of hers, whilst she tenderly kissed the sleepy but wondering child, who from that first moment showed an instinctive fondness for her.

"Welcome"—was the only greeting she uttered, but that in a voice and tone so well remembered by me that it went to my heart. Yes, it was the same Lilith, the cousin, the companion of my youth, who stood before me; improved in appearance and

health, preserving still the same open, candid expression of countenance which had ever characterized her, and feeling a generous satisfaction in receiving us, which she did not wish to conceal. There is no beauty equal to that which a pure and benevolent heart spreads over the features of a young and happy woman.

Yes, she was happy, blessed with all earthly comfort, and richer in the possession of a good conscience than in the wealth which surrounded her and made her the envy of common minds. She had known sorrows—of which I could tell the tale—but she had conquered them by high principle and resignation.

Fair and angelic she appeared to me, her ivory skin set off by the mourning which she still wore for her father, and her auburn tresses simply braided round her head.

While admiring the fresh and still youthful beauty of my cousin, I could not help involuntarily drawing a comparison between her appearance and that of Carmen who stood beside her.

The hard life of toil which she had to endure in America, the anxious cares of a backwoodsman's

wife with a young infant born in the wilderness, exposure to all weathers, sun, snow, and storm,—all this had told with unmistakable force upon her naturally dark and southern complexion, from which all youthful bloom had vanished. This was not wonderful in one who had struggled as she had done—but the soul—the eyes were still there, lustrous and brilliant as ever, full of life and fire, and radiant of the power within. But I am digressing from the course of my narrative. After we had partaken of some refreshment, Lilith conducted us to the apartments prepared for our use. These, which I knew to be the best suite the mansion contained, consisted of a large and comfortable bed-chamber with dressing-rooms attached to it; a beautifully furnished sitting-room for my wife—a smaller one fitted up as a study for myself—and the child and nurse's apartment contiguous to Carmen's dressing-room: nothing could be more convenient or more agreeable to our wishes. It had all been newly furnished in the greatest taste, and a neat-looking smiling Welsh maid was appointed to wait specially upon my wife and little Julia. We found books, prints, flowers, everything that

could serve to make our residence at once comfortable and agreeable.

Lilith did not live alone. Her former governess, Miss Penrose, whom I had often heard of, but never seen, had been for some time an inmate at Plas Owen. Though now old and infirm, she was still attached to her former pupil, to whom in her present solitude she was an object of care and affection. Miss Penrose had been the means of training Lilith's heart and understanding in the sure ways of Christian rectitude. She had formed her mind to the love of all that was virtuous, and the admiration, and still more the appreciation, of what was sound and well-principled in the characters of her fellow-creatures. She had tempered the asperities of a foolish and wayward mother, and had guided her pupil in her studies and her conduct till she had become the singularly amiable character she was. No wonder that Lilith's affectionate regard for Miss Penrose had made a home for her at Plas Owen, where her present infirm age might sink tranquilly into its last place of rest.

My old and trusted friend Mark Haydon was still the respected clergyman of Bettws. Heartily

did I rejoice to see him once more occupying his useful place among his attached parishioners, and a frequent and ever-welcome visiter at Plas Owen. I found him grown older, indeed, but still preserving that cheerfulness of character, blended with reason and good sense, which had formerly so prepossessed me to cultivate his friendship. No society could be more agreeable to me, just escaped from a western wilderness, than this quiet circle. Carmen, who had need of rest after the voyage, and who had suffered more than I at first thought from the hardships of her previous life, visibly improved in health. She admired the country, now in its full bloom of beauty, and, in spite of her constitutional reserve, could not but feel grateful for the unremitting attention which Lilith paid her, who certainly did everything that lay in her power to make her feel herself at home at Plas Owen. Knowing as I did the constitutional timidity and retiring nature of my amiable cousin, I was gratified to perceive how entirely she gave herself up to her new friend—for such I might consider Carmen to have become. Our little girl was an immediate bond of union between them.

Lilith, who was by nature very fond of children, interested herself warmly in everything that concerned the welfare of the little innocent being upon whom she lavished such kindness. We endeavoured to keep Julia to her lessons, but she was in danger of being unintentionally spoilt by my cousin. To-day a little shaggy pony was brought down from the hills for Miss Arnold to ride; to-morrow she is to go to fish, or rather to see fishing in the river—that torrent by the side of which Lilith and I had often rode in years not so long past but that the remembrance of them was yet vivid in my thoughts. One day a man brought up a quantity of fine net-wire from the works, the use of which he was not Saxon enough to explain; and I found out by interpretation that it was to make a little aviary for Miss Arnold's birds in the corner of that small garden that had been Lilith's in her childhood, and which, after having kept it up with affectionate care for many years, she had now given to Julia. The aviary was to be a present for her approaching birthday, and a reward for the diligent care that Julia had bestowed, or imagined she had bestowed, upon her own inde-

pendent territory. The little one's fondness for Lilith was excessive : she would sit upon her lap for hours together, her tiny arm clasped round her neck, prattling forth her thoughts, and asking questions, which Lilith would reply to with the simplicity of character so natural to her, and which rendered her peculiarly fitted to win the love of a child.

Carmen was delighted with her child's happiness, but began to express fear that she should never keep her steadily to the education she intended for her, under such temptation to idleness. In truth, my wife's less pliant character had much to overcome before it could bend completely to the soft, sure influence of Lilith's kindness ; yet Carmen, though proud and reserved, was of too honest and truthful a nature to resist a friendship whose sincerity she could not mistrust, although it might inwardly grate upon some sensitive feelings which were not yet entirely subdued. When she had left England four years before, a jealous hatred of the yet unknown Lilith had been the predominant passion in her breast ; and it was not without a struggle, that prejudice, though proved to have

been founded in calumny, was finally conquered by the evidence which was now impressed upon her through her acquaintance with my cousin herself.

She saw Lilith in all the purity and calmness of a virtuous and well-regulated mind : she saw that, far from being a coquette, or desirous in any degree to retain an empire over me, whom a woman of a lower cast of character might have wished to work upon as an old admirer—there are such women—or to show that she had a share in my heart as well as its legitimate possessor ; my cousin treated me merely as a cousin—as a brother perhaps, and my wife as the nearest relation of the family after me. Carmen saw by the whole routine of English country-life, and by the high principle and simple tastes of her who presided in this abode of all that wealth reasonably employed can give, that there really was no room to suspect or to play off the airs and little plots in which vanity delights, and of which she had seen something in her passage through the world. She at last—I hope not unwillingly—did justice to the English character, of which, in truth, I considered Lilith

the type. Thus time passed in the most agreeable and satisfactory manner.

In the mornings we usually visited some woody glen or some tumbling cascade—we climbed the rocky Dinas, or explored some feudal ruin ; in the evenings, music, which as a quickening spirit to all of us resumed her empire, and served more than any thing else to restore Carmen to her former self. Thus were we happy in ourselves, and the farthest possible from desiring any inroad upon that happiness from strangers or distant acquaintance. I have mentioned that Carmen had already commenced the education of Julia : she was a child possessing great promise of intelligence ; but I ought in candour to confess, that being so great a favourite of my cousin she was in some danger of being spoilt by the kind endeavours of the whole house to appear as if they were made but to please her, and it required the firm hand of a mother to preserve her from so serious an evil. Carmen did not shrink from this task, although it must sometimes have been painful to her feelings to see the way in which the little girl would cling to Lilith against that more unyielding control which Carmen never for a moment suffered to relax

into a partial indulgence. When not in the ladies' society, I amused myself with modelling and drawing : of course I soon had enough to do in a small way, and had devised some pieces of ornamental sculpture for nearly every room in the house, though I had not marble to execute them.

While our life passed happily in this routine of innocent enjoyment, Lilith received notice that Lord Corwen, whose necessities were but too well known in the country, intended to dispute the cession of a large part of the estate which had been understood to be conveyed to her father in the last transaction that had taken place between them. 'Exceedingly annoyed that any such demur should have been raised to a purchase which had been almost forced upon Sir Caradoc by his neighbour, and which had been conducted by a most respectable lawyer, Lilith asked my advice how to proceed. I counselled her to go into the whole details of the case, in which I conceived there must have been some seeming irregularity, with her solicitor, and if flaw there was, not to avoid the responsibility of altering and amending it. All this produced a necessity for frequent conferences between Lilith and myself in

her private study ; and I had more and more reason to admire her calm judgment, and the excellent plain sense with which she looked at her affairs.

“ Why are you so pensive, Lilith ? said I to my cousin one day when I found her seated in her arbour, leaning her head on her hand, apparently absorbed in thought. Three letters lay open on the table before her.

“ Read these, Ambrose,” she replied. “ Are they not enough, though trifles in themselves, to show the vanity of earthly happiness ? Here am I, with far more than any share that I can have deserved of this world’s good, only desiring to live in peace and obscurity to the end of my days, not alone for my own pleasure, but for the benefit of my fellow-creatures, and see how I am persecuted by miserable little affairs that I know not how to get rid of.”

I took the letters she held out to me, and read them over carefully ; while Lilith, with rather more impatience than I had ever seen in her, walked up and down a favourite alley of standard roses which formed an ornamental avenue to the bower she had left. The perusal of the letters at once let me into the causes of her annoy-

ance. The first I read was a very long one, full of the most ordinary gossip, yet not put together without a certain smattering of wit, such as passes current in frivolous but fashionable society. It was from Lilith's aunt, Lady Devonport (on her mother's side), a scheming and interested woman, who had been frequently at Plas Owen during Lilith's younger days on visits to her sister. I had often heard her spoken of by Sir Caradoc in terms sufficient to show his own dislike of her, and to account for her niece's not having seen any thing of her aunt since her mother's death. She seems to have had the hard and worldly character of the late Lady Georgiana Owen, with perhaps more tact and usage of the world. But her letter proved to me at once that her company could be little suitable or useful to Lilith. She proposed a fortnight's visit to her dear niece, whom she had not seen for so long, and would bring her daughter Agatha Devonport, who had been Lilith's playfellow at five years old, and was dying to renew her intimacy with her cousin : "such an affectionate, artless, ingenuous little thing ; such a dear girl, so unsophisticated, though six years senior to Lilith. Then her son Lord Devonport—though she supposed she must not talk of

him—a model, indeed a pattern to young men—an example to all others of his age, and the treasure of a happy mother like herself, who knew the worth of such a son in times like these.” The rest of the epistle was filled with chit-chat about people whose names Lilith had never heard of before,—some uninteresting matches, secondhand bon-mots, on-dits of anybody and everybody, and a long dissertation on the charms of London society, to which she hoped ere long to have the satisfaction of introducing Lilith, where she assumed as a matter of course her niece was dying to appear, and where she would be most happy to offer her the advantage of her home and acquaintance whenever she would come and be chaperoned by her.

I thought I saw through the drift of this letter, and turned to another. This was short, dry, and comprehensive. The family solicitor informed Miss Owen that Lord Corwen had sent formal notice of his intention to dispute the validity of her title to certain lands now in her occupation. The third letter was a little longer than this one, written in rather a bold dashing hand, and turned out to be nothing less than a very straightforward proposal

of marriage from Sir Michael Drakelow, a baronet of considerable notoriety on the turf, and the very last man whom I should have thought of as a husband for my cousin. His expressions of devotion and attachment might be sincere, as the compliments he paid to Lilith's acknowledged good qualities and amiable disposition were most undoubtedly true ; but the whole was expressed in such a commonplace style of flattering expressions and vague generalities, that it might have been culled from the Polite Letter Writer,—which, with the Racing Calendar, were likely enough to compose the chief works in Sir Michael's library. Like clumsy gentlemen of his class, he had the marvellous want of tact to put forward his own fortune (which had been considerable, but which common report—not always ill-informed as to sporting men's resources, on which many an interested eye is sharply fixed—said was greatly diminished) as a proof that he could not possibly be actuated by the sordid views which would in ordinary cases be the motives of suitors to such an heiress as Miss Owen,—a point to which he thought proper to beg her especial attention.

As I folded up this letter, I could not help feeling a certain satisfaction in the conviction that this last part of it alone, to a mind of such delicacy as Lilith's, would have been quite enough to decide his cause in a way he did not expect, had no other reasons existed. But I saw too plainly that he was in all respects utterly unsuited to her, and it seemed to me evident that she herself had no inclination to marry.

While these reflections were passing through my mind I saw Lilith approaching the arbour, led, or rather dragged, by my little girl to see a wonderful bird's nest with two eggs in it, which the child had discovered in a sweetbriar bush, and pricked her fingers in trying to touch them.

"But, Julia, darling, you must not take the little eggs; the mother-bird will scarce like you to look at them."

"But, Aunt Lily,"—so she always chose to call Lilith,—“I only want to turn them a wee bit more to the sun, to keep them warm, you know.”

"That is just the worst thing you could do for them now, Julia, for if you disturb them you will

never see the little birds hatched that you are to feed some day, as I told you."

"Will they be as big as my little ducks that you gave me, Aunty?"

"No; these are only little wrens, such beautiful little birds, that will sing to you, and eat your crumbs, if you will but have patience, and leave them to God and their mother."

"Well, then, I suppose I must have patience and wait," replied the child in a low tone, as if it was a great sacrifice, much to Lilith's amusement and that of Carmen, who had now joined us.

"Lilith," I began—rather solemnly I fear.

"O why do you call me from this more congenial occupation to the dry realities of life?" she cried.

"This dear child, and her innocent, opening mind, are the compensation for many annoyances and vexations. Have you read those tiresome letters?"

"I have; and, irksome as it may be, I recommend you to answer them at once. There is no better way of getting quit of business than by doing it."

"Now, Carmen, see what a visitation I am going to bring upon you. I must invite my aunt, Lady

Devonport—or rather, accept her invitation—to come here. I must amuse a not very amusable person, because she is my aunt.”

“What, another aunty?” interposed little Julia. “Will she be like you, Aunt Lily, and take me about with her everywhere? Won’t that be nice, mamma?”

“You have your mother, Julia, always, if you will come to her,” replied Carmen, rather coldly; “and though one aunt, as you call her, is very good to you, do not expect another in this world.”

Lilith took no notice of the dry manner in which Carmen uttered this reproof to her little girl, and continued, laughingly, “But the young lady, and the son if he should come—oh, what shall I do with them! Ambrose, what do you advise?”

“I advise that you invite them immediately for some time that may be more convenient to you—say six weeks hence, when the London season will be over. Decline the *chaperoning*, and look out in the meantime for some company to meet them.”

“Good! as we can make nothing better of it. Will you, Ambrose, answer the lawyer, that if he

recommends me to resist Lord Corwen's claims, I will do it. I will answer Sir Michael myself," added she, smiling. "And now, Carmen, to reward me, do let me hear that Spanish song of yours once more, and let dear Julia lisp her little ballad that I am so fond of. Let us go to the music-room."

But Julia, with the simple fearlessness of childhood, and liking better to stay where she was, began, without further praying, to sing in her childish treble the following strain, composed for her by her mother.

JULIA'S KINGDOM.

How fair is the kingdom
That calls Julia queen,
The merriest monarch
That ever was seen!

Her empire a garden,
A turf-seat her throne,
With flowers for court ladies
In bright colours grown.

Tho' narrowly bounded
Her fairy domain,
She has plenty of subjects
O'er whom she doth reign.

The moles are her labourers,
Skilful they toil,
They dig, and they drill,
And they turn up the soil.

The worms and the beetles,
They work in the mines,
And the spiders are weavers
Of pattern designs.

The gnats gather taxes
Where tribute is due ;
And the ants are shopkeepers,
And busy ones too.

The lady-cows, dairy-maids,
Useful at need ;
And the flies are the soldiers,
An army indeed.

The grasshopper farms,—
Is contented they say,—
In the sunshine he chirrup
While making his hay.

The bees are the merchants
All laden that go,
With store of gold honey
From hive to and fro.

The wasps are all lawyers—
Got out of their way ;
And the slug an old usurer
Gorging his prey.

The snails are the doctors
Who little grubs cure,
And sometimes they kill them,
You may feel quite sure.

AMBROSE THE SCULPTOR :

The cunning wild rabbits
That run from the hill,
And plunder the bushes,
Are gipsies at will.

Her peers are the hutterflies
Stately and grand,
With their robes and their ermine,—
Illustrious band!

And the birds are her bards,
Historians, who sing;
While with their world-carols
The welkin doth ring.

And oh, may these subjects then
Never complain
That their queen is a tyrant,
Or causeth them pain.

For all that she sees
Of the life, that around,
In these her dear subjects
Doth spring and abound,

Hath been call'd to existence,
To share and divide,
By Him who made Julia,—
And all things beside.

Julia received many kisses for her exertions, and they then returned to the house, the ladies to the music-room, and I to write my letter. Lilith seemed so perfectly happy in our society, so well occupied in the care of her estate and of her people,

as she called its inhabitants, that I could not but see with regret the expected inroad of unwelcome and perhaps interested strangers. She had just arranged to settle me, as her local agent and factor, in an old house, about to be repaired, in a most lovely situation among the mines of Pengerran Issa. I was to overlook the estate in general, and the works of Pengerran and Cwmdudno in particular. The spot I knew well, and Carmen had specially admired it. Eight hundred per annum was to be paid to me as a salary, in addition to other munificent gifts settled and secured on mine and Carmen's joint lives, and a minor sum placed in an endowment society, a small nest-egg, to accumulate for little Julia.

I knew not how to be sufficiently grateful. I answered the solicitor's letter in such a manner as to show that any lawsuit with Lord Corwen would be entered into with regret, because it would imply a doubt of Sir Caradoc's having taken more than his just rights; and I was happy, a fortnight afterwards, to receive a proposal from the opposite side for an honourable arbitration, which I advised Lilit to agree to, and it ended advantageously for her.

Our long-threatened visitors at last arrived. Lady Devonport was a tall and rather stately personage, who might once have been handsome. Her manners were polished, but a little too condescending, and even in her most affable mood she always contrived to give her auditors an idea of her own immense superiority. She was a great talker, and from the mere "*besoin de parler*" became more tolerant of the mass of general society (because she required listeners) than her inborn pride would otherwise have allowed her to be. Clever, but without taste of any kind, whether in art, music, or literature, she praised everything that the world praised, and abused everything that the world cried down, not in the least caring which way the tide went, or knowing enough of the subject to be much hurt even if her own party lost the day.

Her daughter was just what might have been expected from the blood and tuition of such a parent. Well-looking, from youth, figure, dress, and *tour-mure*, her beauty, as it was the fashion to call it, was in my opinion anything but the real beauty of nature, character, or expression. Less clever than her mother, she seemed to make it her aim to be-

come by art and affectation what her mother was by native sharpness and experience of the world. Both of them were inclined to treat Carmen and myself superciliously at first ; but a short experience of Lilith's manifest regard for us showed clearly, to such practised and worldly-minded persons, that they must take another line to succeed at Plas Owen.

It was impossible to live two days in the same house with Carmen without being struck by her grace and talent ; and after a few days more Lady Devonport found it the surest way to her niece's heart to listen to and to praise Carmen's music, which she did as ignorantly as extravagantly, and, in a patronizing manner, to say how she wished she had seen her a few years sooner, when she heard she had lived in London. They took no notice of Julia (who shrank from contact with either mother or daughter with the instinct often shown by children to those who dislike them), but condescended to ask me for an unconseionable number of sketches for their gaudy albums ; and the young lady obligingly offered to practise duets with my wife—not to improve herself, which would have been both

possible and reasonable, but to show Carmen some musical novelties from London, "of which it was such a pity she should be ignorant."

We did but smile at these pretensions, though Lilith's kind heart was sometimes annoyed by them.

Miss Devonport, acting, as it plainly appeared, under her mother's directions, did everything she could to induce Lilith to promise that she would come up to London next season, and go out with her under Lady Devonport's wing.

It would be so delightful to hear her new and unsophisticated observations; "for you know, cousin," she would say, with assumed archness, "you must confess I could teach you something of the world: the only thing, my dearest, that you want. Excuse me, but you must—must come. You must know George Howard—he is my beau-ideal, my particular friend—my....."—A blush and a giggle, both rather forced, interrupted the half-begun confidence.

One day during the visit of this great lady, Lilith received a letter from the chairman of a society established in the county town for some charitable

purpose, to which she had been a liberal contributor, inviting her to attend a subscription-ball which was to be held on that day-week for the purpose of celebrating the anniversary and increasing the funds of the institution in question. She was at the same time earnestly requested by a private note from the chairman, a gentleman of the neighbourhood, to bring with her as many of her friends as she could induce to patronize the ball.

Carmen and myself were not unwilling to step out of our routine life for a useful purpose, and still less so when it was a question of doing what was agreeable to Elith in supporting her by our company, her peculiarly isolated position making her appearance in public particularly irksome to her. But it is one of the most difficult things in the world to persuade a lady of fashion and high society, used to the brilliancy of London, and the exclusiveness of her own clique, to honour with her presence an assembly of the "natives" in a provincial town.

Lady Devonport began by setting her face entirely against it: said she did not come into Wales to go to what she could enjoy much better in London; declared (for the first time in my hearing

since she came to Plas Owen) that she was devotedly fond of the country, delighted in scenery and costumes, and decided against going to this odious ball. The young lady chimed in with all her mother's ideas; but with characteristic versatility asked, almost in the same breath, so many questions about Welsh balls, Welsh music, and Welsh harpers, and "the sort of people one might expect to see there if one went,"—that I half suspected she had no disinclination to go and try to amuse herself, as I saw plainly that Plas Owen was not likely to be gay enough for her tastes. We had a little amusing discussion upon the subject, which ended by Lilith saying, that at all events she must go, and that we had promised to accompany her.

"Did you really never go to a country-ball, aunt?" she asked.

"Oh yes, some twenty years ago, in our own part of the country, where I was obliged to go, very much as you seem to be here. We are all of us now and then constrained by circumstances to mingle with the crowd. My poor sister, too, and your father tried to press me into going to a county-

ball in this very town, on my first visit to them here ; but I escaped in time, and flew off to London."

" Well then, do not fly off now, but stay and help me at this my first appearance, under present circumstances at least."

" Of course, you know, I should not care so much about it: I might find amusement in it; but I cannot produce my daughter in a society so very different from what she has been accustomed to."

" Oh, mamma," interrupted Miss Devonport, " I might enjoy the fun too, perhaps."

" Well, if it must be, and if it will add to your *éclat* in the capital city you mean to honour with your presence, Lilith, we will add ourselves to your train."

" And, mamma, I will write to my brother. You don't know Hubert yet, Lilith—such a love—such a dancér: I will make him come down and bring one or two men with him: he shall bring..."

" Stop, you silly girl," cried Lady Devonport, eager to prevent her voluble and inconsiderate daughter's self-betrayal: " Do you think they would come down to a ball here?"

“ Oh, yes, and then at least we shall have some one to speak to, and with whom I can dance, mamma.”

Lady Devonport had no objection that her son should have a good opportunity of seeing Lilith in the midst of her possessions ; but knowing his supercilious dislike of “ the provinces,” which no one had encouraged more than herself, she dreaded lest the first impression of meeting her in the midst of what she had predetermined must be a vulgar cast of society, should set him immediately against the match she was planning. Consequently she dissuaded her daughter from writing to him. But this, if it prevented the possibility of his bringing down a dozen of his young dandy companions, and especially the young lady’s favourite flirt, the adorable George Howard, did not contribute to put her in good humour. During the days that intervened between this conversation and the ball that had occasioned so much discussion, I was pained to perceive that Carmen seemed gradually to return to that state of reserve and low spirits which had at a former period made me so miserable. I was sure, for every day gave proofs of it, that nothing could

exceed Lilith's kindness of manner in her habitual daily intercourse with her. I had also been, I confess, gratified at seeing that Carmen had made her way into the good graces of the Devonports, as Lady Devonport would frequently seek her society, apparently for its own sake, and bestowed upon her, as it appeared, a large share of her conversation. Of this, however, I heard little; but it seemed generally to run upon her usual topics, the manners of London, the heartlessness of men and husbands, all propounded with more worldly sagacity than deep insight into human nature. It was not till long afterwards that I discovered the drift of all this. Confidence it could not be called, but mischief it certainly was.

Every morning after breakfast, as soon as the post arrived, which was late in that remote county, I repaired to Lilith's study, to confer with her about the business letters, which seemed to come thicker and thicker every day. Julia would frequently accompany me, and try to stay there, in her little coaxing manner, to get rid of the lesson she knew awaited her with her mother; but I generally tried to be firm, and to take the child back to Carmen's

room, where she usually received us in silence, or with a melancholy, "At last, child?" to me sometimes not a word.

Another time, when Lilith had chanced to come out of her sitting-room with me, Julia walking between us, and holding our hands, I perceived Carmen listening attentively to Lady Devonport, who was pointing to us with no benevolent expression of countenance. I can now very well guess what was the purport of that conversation, but at the time I was sorely puzzled to interpret it.

The Spanish character is jealous, and consequently suspicious; too often, I might add, vindictive. These three faults flow as naturally one from the other, as the plant grows from the seed which gives it birth.

Carmen, without having the dark side of the Spanish character, had certainly the blood which forms its most congenial soil: her early education, however, under the eye of a careful and honourable father, had tempered its defects.

The evening of the ball at last arrived, and we left Plas Owen in two carriages. Mr Haydon would not attend balls, as he disapproved of danc-

ing as a clerical accomplishment, and therefore declined being present where he might see some of his cloth amusing themselves in what he considered a diversion unsuited to a clergyman.

The ball was, as it turned out, neither better nor worse than the general run of country-balls. The room was good, the lighting rather less so, the company everything one could desire or expect in a thinly peopled country.

Lady Devonport, dressed in the extreme of fashion, followed by her daughter, who did not yield to her mother in the taste and elegance of her toilette, entered the room as if predestined to be queen of the assembly. The patroness of the ball, with whom Lilith was acquainted, led the party to the best seats, where they had time to look round ere the dancing began.

As different parties entered, sundry were the looks and whispers interchanged between mother and daughter as to the appearance and *tournure* of the respective individuals.

“Do you see, mamma, that woman in pink near the door? what a head she has!”

“Which person do you mean?—the one like

Ceres wreathed with golden corn, fresh from the fields, no doubt ; or that hoiden with bunches of roses on her head !”

“Rose bushes, I should call them, mamma. I wonder she did not introduce some grass plots among them ; there is room for it between the tufts of that *jardin Anglais* on her head !”

“I wonder who this man can be who is evidently coming up to speak to us, Lilith,—do you know him ?”

Before an answer could be given to this question, Sir Michael Drakelow had advanced with a half-bold, half-*nonchalant* air to within a few steps of our seats, when, bowing to Lilith, he said :—

“Miss Owen, I hardly expected this pleasure.....”

Lilith was a good deal disconcerted : her situation with regard to Sir Michael was not known to any person present but myself, and she had not calculated the possibility of meeting him that evening.

“I have usually come to these balls, Sir Michael, in former years,” she replied, with some timidity.

Sir Michael, unabashed, or perhaps encouraged by her visible embarrassment, stood his ground, and evidently intended to ask Lilith to dance; but while he was meditating it, I seized the moment to preclude the necessity of an answer which would have been awkward, by asking myself for the honour of her hand. This settled the matter for that time, and Sir Michael, who was immediately introduced by the lady patroness to Lady Devonport, consoled himself by dancing with her daughter.

Just at that moment the Duke of Merioneth, Lord Lieutenant of the county, struck by Carmen's graceful appearance, requested to be introduced, and asked her to dance.

This she declined, alleging that she never danced, and she remained seated by and talking to Lady Devonport, who became, on perceiving the Duke's notice, more gracious and patronizing to her even than usual. I could hear her expressing the most *outré* praises of her dress and appearance, and pointing out to her the comparatively imperfect style of that of my cousin Lilith. I was placed at the head of the set formed, and consequently only a few paces removed from the great lady

Whilst standing alone during one of the mazes of the figure in which my partner was singly engaged, I overheard her say to Carmen :—

“Mr Arnold is really the most animated ‘cavalier’ of the ball. Is he always so fond of dancing?”

“No,” said Carmen; “he scarcely ever has danced to my knowledge.”

“Well, his partner, my fair niece, has inspired him. Of course you have allowed him, like a reasonable wife, to flirt with his old flame, deeply attached, as they say they were.....”

“Pardon me, Lady Devonport; my husband is no flirt, nor Miss Owen either, I fancy.”

“You take things *au grand sérieux*,—I only meant that acquaintances that are new to you are very old friends to him. You know he spent two years at Plas Owen?”

“Oh, full well.”

Here the music stopped, and with it the conversation—the last words of course coming out with double effect in the silence—as if the whole room were intended to hear them; and hear them I believe they did. I could see that more earnest talk

passed between Carmeh and Lady Devonport, but in a whisper ; I could only guess that I was the subject of it. I restored Lilith to her place, where Sir Michael was already waiting to propose for the next quadrille ; but Lilith being really tired, easily excused herself, and escaped from her pursuer.

The object of our presence at the ball being accomplished, our party were not loth to take their departure, having some miles of mountain-road to go home. I felt relieved from a responsibility as I handed Lilith to her carriage ; and she, I am sure, was not less happy that she was freed from the presence of Sir Michael Drakelow.

Lady Devonport was bored and *ennuyée* by the "rustics," as she called them ; and Miss Devonport, the only individual among us (with the exception of Lilith) who had either youth or spirits to be pleased, took upon herself to enliven us with the result of her observations. Carmen alone was absolutely silent during the whole time of our returning to Plas Owen. Lilith was forced to keep herself awake to answer the questions of her sprightly cousin as to all the Joneses—who naturally predominate at a North Welsh county-ball. She pre-

tended not to understand the difference there could be between one Jones and another ; or why the whole county did not formally adopt the name of Jones and proscribe every other.

“What! even the Owens?” said Lilith, playfully.

“Oh, I forgot them : let the Owens take forcible possession of the next county, and declare war upon the Joneses in true feudal style.”

“I am afraid we are not quite numerous enough, Agatha.”

“I suppose not ; if you count the enemy in triplets, as you did those three Joneses, you told me were, respectively, Jones Jones the squire ; Jones Evan Jones ; and Prytherch Jones Jones,—all of some place that sounds as if it belonged to the map of Tartary rather than to our own island.”

“What! the three young *élégants*, whose hair seemed to stand on end, and whose staccato movements were so perfectly in unison? as I hinted to Mrs Arnold, though I seldom venture on musical criticisms,” yawned Lady Devonport.

Lilith could not help laughing at this musical observation, and rejoined :—

“They are very good people, however, and their sister, whom you saw with them, I like as well as any of my neighbours.”

“That girl, I suppose, in stripes, spots, or cheeks, with the streamers of ribbons for colours! You must describe by symbols if I am to resuscitate her portrait in my memory.”

“Dear cousin Agatha, do not be so unmerciful.”

The young lady, whose talent was dress, and whose spirits were evidently rising with the occasion, was provokingly interrupted in her tirade by the carriage stopping at the gate of Plas Owen, just as she was declaring that she would the very next day sketch the delightful costumes she had seen, and bring them into vogue in London as the fashions of a newly discovered country—latitude and longitude unknown. Miss Devonport's lively sallies had banished our sleepiness so effectually that we were really sorry for the interruption. Carmen alone seemed melancholy and unhappy. I endeavoured to extract from her something which would lead me to the cause of her change of spirits, and followed her through our apartment to our

dear little Julia's nursery. She bent over the sleeping child, and as she gazed at it lying tranquil in its innocent slumbers, tears trickled down her cheek. She tenderly kissed it, and then, fearful of its awaking from that happy sleep of youth and health, we softly left the room together ; but when once more alone—alone with night and our own hearts—I again ventured to ask her the cause of her depression, which, alas ! I partly conjectured, after what I had overheard. She made no answer, and we retired to our pillows with feelings of mutual sorrow and distrust.

Two days afterwards the Devonports returned to London.

Lilith had refused to join them there, at least for that year. The visit had passed off well, though there could be little congeniality between such discordant minds. But, as I speedily found, it had left other sad traces behind it, which nearly concerned myself and my domestic happiness.

CHAPTER X.

Wir sind dem aufwachen naß, wenn wir träumen, daß wir träumen.—
Unser Leben ist kein Traum, aber er soll und wird vielleicht einer werden.
Novalis.

I gave him all my being, like a flower
That flings its perfume on a vagrant breeze ;
A breeze that wanders on and heeds it not.
His scorn is lying on my heart like snow,
My eyes are weary, and I fain would sleep ;
The sweetest sleep is underneath the ground.

ALEXANDER SMITH.

PLAS OWEN, after the departure of its fashionable visitors, once more resumed its normal state of calm and tranquillity. Would that I could add, of happiness also ; but that was denied. The gaiety of our late party, and the employment which my endeavours to assist Lilith in the entertainment of

her guests had forced upon me, had prevented my observing Carmen as nearly I did afterwards.

She suffered about this time much from headaches, and her general nervous susceptibility increased to a degree that alarmed me ; but though her reserve habitually led her to conceal her feelings, I could not avoid suspecting that there must exist some moral as well as physical cause for so great a change in her appearance and temper.

My distress was heightened by perceiving that our little Julia, whose disposition was naturally most affectionate towards her mother, had become gradually estranged from her. Carmen, whose system both of teaching and of management was rather strict than otherwise, was inflexible on the subject of attention and regularity at lessons.

Now it so happened that Lilith having nothing to teach, but a great many *bombons* and toys always at Julia's disposal, became such a favourite with the child, that she was not always ready to go to her book when the hour came for repairing to the school-room, nor very ready with her lesson when there. In short, poor Julia had often to do her work twice over, and with childlike candour would

say, "I do like Aunt Lily's room so much the best," which I could see caused her mother a pang that she could ill control.

Poor Lilith, unconscious of these results of her kindness, occupied herself more and more with both Carmen and Julia, and thus unknowingly added fuel to the fire that smouldering lay beneath that mother's heart.

Lilith and I both pressed her to see Dr Jones of Carmarthen, who we knew would come willingly to Plas Owen, though rather beyond his usual beat. He came, and recommended her to take opium in small doses, because they might be repeated without danger when she suffered, as was often the case, from want of sleep.

Carmen followed this advice, and at first certainly obtained rest by it; but it was not rest undisturbed.

As it often happens in nervous cases, that which gave physieal relief did but leave the mind more liberty; and that mind being in a state far from tranquil, awoke but to clearer sensations of sorrow and desperation. One morning, after a troubled night, yet not a sleepless one, Carmen started

up suddenly, and, looking wildly around her, exclaimed :

“ I see him ! I see him now distinctly ! he is there ! ”

“ Whom, dear Carmen, do you see ? ”

“ Ah, he is gone ! ”

“ Tell me, then, dearest ! ”

“ ’Twas him,—best of men !—our truest friend ! He is gone ! we shall never see him more ! ” She shuddered violently as she uttered these incoherent words, and fell back upon her pillow. Greatly alarmed, I rang for her maid, and we carried her to the sofa in her dressing-room, where she lay some time in a half lethargic sleep, the natural consequence of opium. From this state she slowly recovered. I was loth to allude to the dream, which must have been the cause of her emotion ; but being at length roused, she spoke of it herself, and I begged to know more of what seemed to have been a fearful vision.

“ Fearful—ay, fearful it was. I dreamt I was in a vale of Death, deep as a valley of the high Alps, covered with eternal ice, and shrouded with thick endless forests, as those of America. Sharp

granite-peaked rocks, and utterly impassable precipices, hemmed in the gloomy scene. Sudden I heard the roar of sea, and whirlwind, and storm: all nature shook as with an earthquake: and there passed by me, riding on ghastly horses, a long black cavalcade of funereal figures, whose faces I could not distinguish. Swift as lightning they passed: one, only one, paused an instant before me.....I saw it was a stiffened corpse, upright, and riding as in life, a bold and gallant cavalier. I saw no more...I felt it was our best of friends!"

She then relapsed into a highly nervous fit of hysterical weeping; and I sat by her, anxiously watching her as she sank gradually into a sleep, which, though far from tranquil, promised at least some respite from her agitation. While I remained there, my thoughts seriously occupied with the future fate of my wife and child, Lilith softly entered the room to inquire how Carmen was, who, she had heard, was more than usually unwell. She brought me at the same time a letter with a black seal, the address of which was written in a strange clerk-like hand. Neither seal nor writing were familiar to me. I turned it over and over in my

hands, partly curious, partly indifferent to the contents of a letter whose writer I could not even conjecture. At length breaking the seal, I commenced reading it, though I began to do so with an inexplicable feeling of reluctance, which even now I look back to as a clear proof of the power of presentiment in cases of death.

It was too true. The letter was from the family solicitor of Lord Montacute, and was written by desire of his deeply afflicted mother to acquaint me with the death of that inestimable friend, of a malaria fever in Greece. His will, which had been carefully drawn up by and left with the same solicitor before Lord Montacute's leaving England, had been opened, and was found to leave me a legacy of £2000, of which the executors, as in duty bound, had directed the solicitor to inform me.

Here indeed was sorrow fallen on us. My old, my trusted, my most conscientious and kind-hearted friend was taken from us and from his family in the prime of life, actively and generously employed in furtherance of a great cause to which he had devoted his energies, and, alas ! his life. This was indeed a terrible blow that I had to break to my wife in her

present enfeebled state of health, and I might almost say, mind. And then her dream, which not an hour before I had heard from her own lips—that awful dream, the sad, the truthful foreboder of evil. I trembled as I reflected on the mysterious power which seems to prepare the heart of man by supernatural warnings for the stroke which is about to fall upon him. I spare you, my friend, the distressing scene which ensued upon the waking of Carmen from her feverish sleep—or rather long trance, as it appeared. Unrefreshed, still nervously trembling, she saw the mourning letter, insisted on knowing its contents, learnt the sad truth of her dream, and again relapsed into insensibility.

* * * * *

My poor wife recovered but slowly from this severe shock ; and when she once more resumed her usual occupations, it was impossible not to perceive that her nerves had been weakened to a degree that filled me with the greatest anxiety. Still she continued her daily lessons with Julia as much as possible in the same manner and with the same regularity as before, but it was too plain that it was done with great effort and constraint. Even little

Julia seemed conscious of a change in her mother, and gave signs of shyness and timidity on approaching her that were quite foreign to the child's nature. Carmen also, who had formerly been so much gratified by the fondness shown to Julia by my too indulgent cousin, now evinced a jealousy of her influence over the child which pained me extremely. She had indeed shown some sensitiveness on this subject once or twice before her late indisposition, but I was in hopes it had subsided : such, however, was not the case.

Meanwhile I found a refuge from my cares by renewed assiduity in my office of manager of the property of Plas Owen. This obliged me to have long and private consultations with Lilith in her own apartment, and at other times kept me much away from the society of my wife. These unavoidable absences seemed to disturb her temper not a little, though the cause was perfectly well known to her. I watched her narrowly. I remarked that she was wayward and inconsistent in her conduct towards the child, who was in consequence become more and more attached to Lilith, with whom the vivacious little creature found more sympathy in

her playful moods, and more even good temper in her quiet ones.

One morning while we were at breakfast, Lilith received a letter, which, after glancing it over, she hastily tossed to me saying :

“Cousin, here is Sir Michael again : the same persecution as before : what can I do to get rid of him?”

“Leave him to me,” I replied, “or at least leave me his letter.”

“What for, Ambrose? unless you will be kind enough to answer it for me.”

“That is just what I meant to ask your leave to do. It is really too bad, that after one such decided refusal, you should be tormented with these repeated proposals, because you spoke three civil words to him at a county-ball.”

“My whole acquaintance with him was the seeing him at two or three such balls a few years ago.”

“Then you really must not scruple to put him into my hands. I will go and call on him, if you like that better?”

“Oh, no ; this sort of annoyance must be kept at

a distance. Your going to him by my desire would be coming to closer quarters with an angry man than I should like."

Carmen was sitting there, silent and looking very unwell. I knew she had not slept, and her eyes, bright though they still were, told a tale of low fever and inward excitement that was now but too common with her. The sallow paleness of her complexion contrasted with her raven hair, her thin worn features seldom yielding to any expression, gave the idea of declining health in years that belong to little more than the bloom of youth, and made me apprehensive of some sudden fit of illness.

Julia at this moment ran into the room, and, jumping with childlike joy, announced that the speckled Hamburg hen had hatched twelve tiny, tiny chickens ; "and so mamma, will yon not excuse me my lesson this morning after breakfast, and let me go with Aunt Lily to feed the dear little chickens?"

"No, Julia, you cannot go to-day."

Poor Julia, who had reckoned upon an easy victory, in consideration of such an important event as

the arrival of a dozen new-born speckled chickens, was quite discomposed at this dry refusal.

She stood silent—coloured violently, and turned aside to conceal her tears.

Both Lilith and myself felt for her, and attempted to intercede; but Carmen suddenly rose from her seat, and said to me with unusual asperity:

“Now, Ambrose, I must beg for no interference with my management of Julia; and, as for your own satisfaction, I should think no other influence than your wife’s was needed when the subject in question was your own child.”

“Carmen,” I replied, greatly moved, “what influence can you suspect that can be hostile either to the child’s own welfare or to your rights as a mother?”

“Ambrose,” cried she, “you well know what influence I have lost with you; and is my child—my Julia—to be drawn from me too?”

Lilith here rose and left the room, not without visible signs of emotion, which I could well interpret: but she was too kind, too patient of the weakness of others, to take further notice of what was passing.

I immediately began to remonstrate in strong terms with Carmen on the utter unreasonableness of her behaviour, but no time was left me to speak before, drawing Julia after her, she quitted me to retire to her schoolroom, but, alas ! in no fitting temper for giving instruction to the sorrowing and wondering child.

You may imagine the tempest of my feelings. Annoyed beyond all measure at what had occurred, and especially that Lilith had been witness to an ebullition of temper for which nothing but my wife's state of health could be offered as an apology, I paced up and down the room in a fever of contending emotions. Carmen's mind was evidently in no state for the calm consideration of any subject, and her health rendered it dangerous to risk any chance of increasing an irritability already too much worked upon by her jealousy, however unfounded.

I felt humiliated and ashamed for the undeserved treatment of our most kind and considerate cousin and hostess, and I blushed when I thought of the frightened, yet not unobservant look of that dear child, who was now beginning to tremble before her mother, and instinctively—though with no con-

sciousness of the fact—poor little girl—to prefer the society of her kind aunt, as she would call her, to that in which she ought to have found her greatest pleasure.

Would I had never left the pure, the calm Artist's life, where my daily toil was at once the duty and pleasure of my existence! where every new subject, every composition, or group, or idea that occupied either my head or my hand, became the source of some new inspiration, stimulating my exertions ever more and more in the onward progress of genius! Then were my nights tranquil, my days happy; then every thought tended to the purpose of life—to the exercise of the mind in its healthy and legitimate vocation: practice was success achieved over difficulties vanquished—reflection ever led to further investigation into principles, and to a higher step in the science of my profession, afterwards to be exemplified in the productions of that art to which I was devoted. Then, if I sometimes dreamed of immortality, I was at least, and that constantly, rewarded by contentment.

Now independent,—I laughed a bitter laugh at that hypocritical word *independent*—with fortune,

connexion, and position, according to the vapid jargon of this empty world, was I happy? I shuddered to analyze my situation. I had nothing to reproach myself with, and I could not deny but that the means of happiness were about me: but it was not there. Care and disappointment are the lot of man; and, hard though the task may be, manly heart and courage can face them, can contend with, yes, and vanquish them, when they appear in their proper form as the enemies of our virtuous peace. But when they insidiously obtrude themselves into the life of married love, the seeming cheerful home, the fair domestic circle, or among the smiles of friendship, who can bear up against them? I was wretched.

On looking back, I thought I could perceive that the unexpected confidence of Lady Devonport had played no small part in the unsettling of Carmen's mind, and in infusing into it a jealousy of Lilith, both as to my child and myself.

Stung by the thought, I hastened to seek my cousin in her apartment, anxious to allay what I knew must be the wounded feeling of that gentle heart, and to open my now fixed determination of

leaving her hospitable mansion. I would then have an explanation with Carmen, who, I doubted not, would gladly come into my plan, even if I did not succeed entirely in removing the effect of Lady Devonport's base insinuations.

I found Lilith in her study, not, as usual with her, occupied in some useful or necessary employment, but sitting pensively by the fire, her head resting on her hands, and her eyes evidently red with weeping. Letters were on the table, some sealed and directed ; one lay open as if just finished, or waiting, perhaps, for a postscript.

She did not wait for me to address her, but, speaking in her usual cheerful tone and manner, little in accord though it was with her looks,—she began—without any allusion to what had passed, “ Ambrose, your new house will soon be ready for you ; I have written to the builder, to say I expect him to keep his word that it should be completed by Christmas. It will be so convenient, just at the end of the park ; such a nice walk for you and dear little Julia. Carmen too.....(here her voice faltered a little).....Carmen will be agreeably employed in settling and arranging your

new habitation with taste and comfort : none but a wife can do that effectually."

I was overcome, as you may well conceive, with emotions which left me hardly the power of utterance. It was more than simple gratitude for her delicate and munificent care for our welfare,—had worldly comforts been able to secure it—it was a feeling of respect and heartfelt thankfulness for that forbearance, the righteous fruit of her angelic temper, which made her naturally, and without an effort, able to overlook what certainly could not have escaped her. Such kindness is far beyond the kindness of words : nor can words repay it.

" Dear cousin," I replied, " I fear your great goodness has imagined a happiness for us which is not likely to be realized in this world. I fear, indeed I cannot conceal from you or from myself that I feel we cannot profit by your noble kindness. I am unable to remain at Plas Owen.....my services would be ever yours, could I stay.....but my destiny impels me elsewhere. Fate urges me. I must not stay where my place is not ordained..... Pardon my incoherence.....I must again devote the talents I possess to the exercise of that art

which is my calling. London alone will give me a field for sculpture: your kindness, Lilith, has already made it possible for me to start afresh in my career, and by God's help, my industry will yet lead me to success. Excuse me."

My voice trembled so that I could not enlarge upon the topic on which I was forced to speak, or enter into any further explanations. I ended abruptly, and sat down.

Lilith, for a few minutes, was dumb—not with surprise, for she was aware something was wrong,—but with true, kind-hearted sorrow, that matters were advanced so far in a wrong course that they were beyond her power to mend them.

"Oh, dear cousin," she exclaimed, "do not desert me! You know not what difficulties I had to go through before you came: you know not the lonely hours I have passed, and shall still have to pass, in my solitary state, willing to do all that is right, but feeble, not to say powerless, without a stronger help at hand. Since you came here it has been so different. Have we not been happy? Has not our youth's young dream revived in all inno-

cence, but in brightest colours? Tell me what to do and I will do it.....Tell me what will please or content Carmen.....but to lose you all, you, dear Ambrose, and our little Julia.....”

Tears filled her eyes, and mine were already overflowing. The sight of this generous and high-principled girl weeping—and for me and mine too—transported me beyond all bounds. I seized her hand, and kissed it with fervour, and said something, I know not what, for all things present vanished from my sight as I beheld, or thought I beheld, the darkling face of Carmen reflected in a mirror that hung on the wall before me. I was in a mist, my senses had almost left me, when a wild cry, in a voice too well known to be by me mistaken, recalled me to a consciousness of where I was. No, it was no illusion that my brain, excited as it was, had falsely conjured up: it was reality; it was my jealous, unhappy wife, her face distorted by the cruel passion raging within her soul, who stood beside me. Aghast, I hardly breathed: Lilith's distress equalled mine, which was indeed more on her account than my own. I had become but too

much familiarized with scenes of late, to be astonished at them now, when a crisis was evidently approaching in Carmen's fate and my own.

Unrestrained by any feeling of regard for the presence she was in, Carmen burst forth into passionate reproaches against me, to which it was, I well knew, useless to attempt a reply.

“And is this the way you have imposed upon me, cruel, deceitful man? Is it thus you leave the wife to whom you have sworn constant, immutable fidelity, in order to make yourself the slave of another? Yes, I see through it all : it is a tissue of hypocrisy and deception from the very outset ; for from the day you first set foot in this house you have never loved me. Heartless and unfeeling, you have been stoic enough to renounce wealth to marry me out of a poor compassion, a pitiful worldly point of honour, and you called it love. What a profanation of that holy name ! Lilith, if ever my husband's heart was mine, you have taken it from me. Your own family have perceived it ; so there can be no exaggeration of mine on that head. They know you, and have seen through you both. And my poor child too ; could you not leave me her in-

nocent love as a consolation for what I have lost? Her heart also is gone from me, estranged into other paths, far from the mother's bosom which ought to be a child's sure and only refuge. I have nothing left to me in this world. Innocent or not of guilt, cruel woman, you can never restore to me what I have lost."

Lilith, petrified, answered not a word. She rose, and about leaving the room, gently endeavoured to take Carmen's hand, which was scornfully withdrawn.

Left more at liberty, I then, unable to restrain myself, spoke severely and openly to Carmen, as perhaps I ought to have done long before.

"Carmen, where is your sense of propriety, of justice? I say nothing of gratitude for kindness; for, in the delusions under which you are labouring, that of course would be but a straw in the balance. You take so false an estimate of things, by reason of the blind jealousy which dims your faculties, that you are incapable of seeing the injury you inflict, or the groundless nature of the suspicions which mislead you. Jealousy has weakened your mind, Carmen; your ungoverned passion makes

you act in a way that will drive us from what might have been an Eden—a paradise of love! into a wide world—a desert of trouble and wretchedness;—desperate prospect for us and for our poor child!”

Carmen, worked up to a pitch of frenzy by my words, rose from the sofa, on which she had flung herself, as if prepared to speak. She did not, however, utter a word, but casting on me a look of such direful misery, such deep despair, as in long after-years could never be erased from my memory, left the room. Those dark deep eyes seemed to be fraught with reproaches beyond the power of language to express.

My first impulse was to follow her; but on reflection I thought it better to allow a little time to pass, in the hope that calmness, if not reason, might bring a blessed change over her benighted mind.

I walked out, not knowing where I was going, until I reached the park. Unconsciously, I found myself pursuing my almost daily path towards that house that hopes, now destined never to be realized, had in prospect pointed out as the haven of my

stormy life. I started from the track, which was now hateful to me. I went on, or rather ran wildly to the rocky heights, from which I had oft looked down upon that glorious view, which had been my delight in times when Lilith and I had rambled about, ever seeking new beauties in Nature—and finding them, because I was happy. Now every place, every well-known point, seemed odious, and eloquent of reproach to me: the very rocks and trees seemed to upbraid me for deserting Carmen. At every step I remembered that here I had been happy: the very thought under present circumstances made me in my own eyes a criminal.

I threw myself on the turf, and lay there I know not how long. Hours of depression—hours of dreary woe, passed over my head. There I remained, at once restless in spirit, yet not caring to move. I felt as if my good genius, who had supported me through so many trials of life, had now deserted me, and that hereafter I was to be left a wanderer upon the earth, without a supporter, without a guide.

The autumn wind was sweeping sadly over the many-coloured oaks, and showing the ground cov-

ered partially with their russet spoils. Summer was gone, yet the declining sun shone brightly as it neared the horizon, and tinted the mountain-distance with its rays of purple and gold. Once I could have enjoyed that scene: now it spoke of nought but the melancholy approach of winter and death. Everything now had a moral meaning for me: all around said Prepare—prepare! but for what? My very heart seemed lead.

At length I felt, in spite of the hard trial of mind that oppressed me, that my duty called me elsewhere. I felt that, whatever might be the result, I must at all hazards be at my post; I must see my wife; I must not any longer desert Carmen.

Rousing myself from my reverie, I became aware that the shades of evening were approaching. I had still some distance to go; and, impelled by the violence of my thoughts, I started up and hurried homewards.

It was nearly dark when I reached the house by a short and unfrequented path that led through a tangled copse that closed the mountain-side immediately above Plas Owen; searing, as I hurried along, the birds upon their roost, and rousing more

than one ill-omened owl, who greeted me with screeches that did but quicken my forebodings of evil.

I rushed up stairs in an excited state of mind, and sought admittance to Carmen's dressing-room. The door was fastened. Going into the nursery, which adjoined it, I found the nurse, and hastily inquired where the little girl was, and whether my wife was better, and had not perhaps kept the child with her.

"No, sir," replied the woman; "Mrs Arnold was lying down all the morning suffering from headache, and Miss Julia cried so to be allowed to go to Miss Owen's room, that I let her go, sir, and she has been there ever since. I am just thinking that it is about time for me to go and fetch her to her tea."

"But your mistress, how is she?"

"Oh, sir, she is very unwell, I think, sir. She came in here an hour ago and asked for Miss Julia,—it was just after Miss Julia went to Miss Owen,—and I told mistress she was gone there; and when she heard that, her eyes looked as bright as coals. I offered to go and fetch her back, sir; but she said,

speaking low and faint, 'Never mind, you need not go now,' and looked in a way quite displeased. Oh, sir, I am sure Mrs Arnold must be ill; her face is as white as my apron, and her eyes——"

Exceedingly alarmed, I waited for no more, but went round to my own room, through which there was also a communication to the dressing-room. I knocked gently at the door, and asked for admittance. There was no answer. I knocked again more loudly, and while listening for reply with the deepest attention, my eyes fell on a letter in her hand-writing, which lay on a small table close beside me, and had escaped my notice. I tore it hastily open. Great God! never can I forget those fatal lines:

"Ambrose, I leave you! I deliver you from the wretched Carmen. It is the only way left—so only can you be free. She is good, pure, beautiful! she has all this world can give—she alone can make you happy—I have long ceased to do so—she has all your love and my Julia's. But now I sought my child for the last time: I would have given her the last kiss with a mother's love;—she was with Lilith. She is no longer mine. All are gone—

father, husband, child, friend. I have nothing left to me. My heart will bear up no longer. Think of me, Ambrose : pity and remember me in my grave, for I die to make you happy. Farewell !”

All things swam before my sight, yet my eyes took in distinctly the fatal writing. I saw it all in an instant ere I could well follow the lines. With the convulsive energy of frenzy I burst the door open by force, and—oh God ! what a spectacle met my distracted vision ! Only the energy of my despair sustained me.

My unhappy wife was lying on the floor apparently lifeless, a bottle of laudanum clenched in her hand. I recognised at once the drug she had been in the habit of taking, though sparingly ; and seizing the phial, saw to my consternation that it was empty. If indeed she had swallowed the entire quantity (and I had seen the bottle more than half-full but yesterday), then, indeed, it was a case beyond hope !

I screamed aloud wildly for assistance. I pulled the bells. I raised the inanimate form of my beloved and laid her on the sofa. I felt her heart—her temples—no sign of life—no perceptible breath-

ing—animation seemed perfectly extinct. Before I could collect my faculties, Lilith was by my side. Nothing could exceed her presence of mind and wisdom in doing what was to be done, and in giving immediate orders in the plainest and most decided manner. The bell which I had pulled with violence had brought Lilith's own maid and the nurse, who were close by—other servants were heard coming down the corridor; but Lilith met them herself at the door, crying,—

“ Send instantly, with all speed, for Dr Jones—and to the village-apothecary, without a moment's delay. And you, nurse, go to the child and keep her quiet—let nobody come near her—and speak yourself to no one till we call you again. If the housekeeper is there she may come in.”

The housekeeper was within hearing, and waited not for a second summons. She was an old trustworthy servant, who had been many years in the family, and of whose discretion and attachment she was sure.

In the mean time, even while she was giving these orders, she had secured the fatal phial, and put it out of sight. She had at the first moment

picked the letter up from the floor, which had dropped from my hand, and doubtful what it might contain, and thoughtful even at such a crisis, she had silently placed it in my pocket, where afterwards I found it. These essential things done, she turned to assist the housekeeper, who was earnestly employed in fruitless endeavours to revive her who seemed indeed beyond all human aid.

The apothecary soon arrived, and applied every remedy usual in such cases, but without success. Life was certainly not yet extinct, but hope, alas! there was none.

All that dreadful night did Lilith sit on one side, and I on the other of the bed, on which lay the inanimate dwelling-place of an immortal soul, and that of no common order—a soul that had rashly dared to flee from its appointed duties in this world, to appear in a higher one, laden with the awful responsibility of presenting itself not only unprepared, but uncalled.

Our* thoughts were probably in unison, yet neither of us uttered one word, save in relation to the requirements of the patient. My head was so confused by the awful shock, and my mind so

unavoidably carried back to former scenes and recollections, not always without some sting of self-condemnation, that I was far less able to be of use than my admirable cousin.

Towards morning, after a night whose stillness seemed the forerunner of death, the sufferer showed some signs of returning consciousness, which brought in its train the gloomy feelings of remorse and despair. The features, which had reposed in a fixed expression of melancholy tranquillity, were gradually relaxed; distinct and difficult breathings were heard, mingled with indistinct efforts at articulation. At last, the faint words:—

“Lilith, forgive me—I knew not what I did”—trembled on the dying lips, as she recognised the pitying form bent over her; that sweet face whose angelic smile of peace and pardon in answer must assuredly have brought comfort to that disturbed soul; for if ever the forgiveness of one human being could bring heavenly consolation to another, so I humbly trust and pray did the loving charity of Lilith restore hope at that dark moment of trial to my unhappy Carmen.

She lingered yet two days. Dr Jones arrived, but could do nothing.

Haydon also was sent for. In the few and short intervals of consciousness which some strong restoratives, procured for her, she was able to confess to him, in a low and feeble voice, the awful sin she had committed; and entreated, with broken words and deep sobs, God's pardon for her offence. But the fearful consciousness of crime almost choked her utterance, when, her whole frame trembling, she begged him to pray with her and for her—that the pardon she so much needed might be granted to her—and the blessing of God vouchsafed to both husband and child in that world where she was about to leave them.

* * * * *

And now again it was night, and the closing scene was nigh.

Deeply considering that penitence, even at the last moment, may be accepted on high, Haydon, ever judging charitably the errors of frail mortals,

in whose behalf God's promises have been vouchsafed to a sinful world, delayed not to administer the last sacrament to the erring sister about to leave us. Lilith and I knelt on each side of her death-bed, and partook of the solemn ordinance with awe and fear.

The holy rite was ended, yet still we knelt around the bed in deep and constant prayer. Silent were the vows we made of fulfilment of future duties in this life, with humble but earnest supplications to the Most High, that He might be merciful to the departing soul.

She lay resigned, yet, with wandering eyes, evidently sought something. Speech was denied ; but Lilith, ever watchful, penetrated the mother's heart—she whispered audibly, " Julia ! "

Carmen once more opened her half-closed eyes : and when the little innocent was brought and held out to her in the bed, she fixed her now dim gaze upon it, and seemed happy.

The child, half-frightened, half-sleepy, stretched out its little arms to receive its dying mother's kiss, and then softly fell asleep upon that mother's bosom.

Yes ; Carmen's last feeling was happy—she lay with her loved infant sleeping upon her breast the peaceful slumber of childhood.

Some time elapsed, I know not how long, when, raising herself by an effort, she strove to place the child in Lilith's arms, saying, " To you I bequeath her."

My heart throbbed violently ; all was now indeed peace between us.

Then taking my hand, she gently placed it in that of my cousin, and feebly pressing them together, said once more, " Forgive.....remember me."

Lilith, for the first time, since the occurrence of that fatal tragedy, raised her eyes to mine.

What deep seriousness, what angelic purity I read in that holy glance. No earthly passion marred the serenity of its transparent expression. It was enough : we mutually understood each other's thoughts. What heavenly love did not the words of the expiring Carmen breathe into our souls !

The last act of a dying wife, which to some minds would have appeared an injunction to cement our earthly union, did but to us confirm the conviction

of the gulf that lay between us in this world—impassable—for evermore.

That was no moment to analyze our inward feeling : we were absorbed in care for the dying.

Tenderly did Lilith support her, and breathed into her ear the hope, and yet more, the trust, in One mightier than herself to suffer and to pardon wrong.

* * * * *

She had gently replaced the child by Carmen's side, and while it slept peacefully the sleep of infancy and innocence upon its parent's heart, that mother's spirit quitted its mortal tenement for ever !

There was a solemn pause. Then Lilith, slowly rising and kissing reverentially for the last time those sad remains, as if in mute acceptance of the charge so solemnly given to her, gently removed the sleeping innocent from the stiffened grasp of the loving arms in which it was nestled, and tenderly carried away the unconscious child from the dread scene of mortality ; and I was left alone—alone

with the loved of my youth—by the side of her whom in my manhood I had sworn at the altar to cherish and protect. There did I kneel in solitary but earnest prayer until morning's dawn, when they came to prepare the mortal spoil of my Carmen for her grave—where all flesh shall rest in peace.

CHAPTER XI.

Ginst da ich bitter Thränen vergoß, da in Schmerz aufgelöst meine Hoffnung zerrann, und ich einsam stand am dürrn Hügel, der im engen, dunkeln Raum die Gestalt meines Lebens barg; einsam, wie noch kein Einsamer war, von unsäglicher Angst getrieben, kraftlos, nur ein Gedanke des Glends noch:—wie ich da nach Hilfe umherschaute, vorwärts nicht konnte und rückwärts nicht, und am fliehenden, verloschnen Leben mit unentlicher, Sehnsucht hing:—da kam aus blauen Fernen, von den Höhen meiner alten Seligkeit ein Dämmerungs schauer, und mit einemale riß das Band der Geburt des Lichtes Fessel. Hin flog die irdische Herrlichkeit, und meine Trauer mit ihr, zusammen floß die Wehmuth in eine neue, unergründliche Welt; da Nachtbegeisterung, Schlummer des Himmels kamst über mich: die Regenel hob sich sacht empor, über der Gegend schwebte mein entbundener neugeborner Geist. Zur Staubwolke wurde der Hügel, durch die Wolke sah ich die verklärten Züge der Geliebten. In ihren Augen ruhte die Ewigkeit; ich faßte ihre Hände, und die Thränen wurden ein funkelndes, unzerreißliches Band. Jahrtausende zogen abwärts in die Ferne, wie Ungewitter. An ihrem Halse weint' ich dem neuen Leben entzückende Thränen.—Es war der erste, einzige Traum, und erst seitdem fühl' ich ewigen, unwandelbaren Glauben an den Himmel der Nacht und sein Licht, die Geliebte.—*Novalis.*

Once when I was shedding bitter tears, when, dissolved in pain my Hope had melted away, and I stood solitary by the grave that in

its dark narrow space concealed the Form of my life ; solitary as no other had been ; chased by unutterable anguish ; powerless ; one thought, and that of misery ; here now, as I looked round for help ; forward could not go, nor backward, but clung to a transient extinguished Life with unutterable longing ;—lo, from the azure distance, down from the heights of my old blessedness, came a chill breath of Dusk, and suddenly the band of Birth, the fetter of Light, was snapped asunder. Vanishes the Glory of Earth, and with it my Lamenting ; rushes together the infinite Sadness into a new unfathomable World : thou Night's inspiration, Slumber of Heaven, camest over me ; the scene rose gently aloft ; over the scene hovered my enfranchised new-born spirit ; to a cloud of dust that grave changed itself ; through the cloud I beheld the transfigured features of my Beloved. In her eyes lay Eternity ; I clasped her hand, and my tears became a glittering indissoluble chain. Centuries of Ages moved away into the distance, like thunder-clouds. On her neck I wept, for this new life, enrapturing tears. It was my first, only Dream ; and ever since then do I feel this changeless everlasting faith in the Heaven of Night, and its Sun my beloved !

CARLYLE'S *Translation of the above.*

THE days following were a blank. My memory serves me not. One fact alone remains graven on my mind—I was conscious of being led, led almost as a feeble child by the kind hands of my friend Haydon to the grave of my unhappy wife. Well I knew the spot : it had often been pointed out by her in our quiet walks as the one nook of peace and repose in which she would one day desire to rest. How little did either of us think how soon that day would come. The place was not near the grave of

my mother ; and it gave my heart a pang to reflect that it was so. But it was close to that of the unfortunate Margaret Haydon, and lies at the foot of the aged yew-tree which overshadows so many generations of high and low, rich and poor. A plain stone and cross mark her earthly bed or grave—in Welsh they are synonymous—and a short and simple inscription, after the manner of the country, giving name and date in English, followed by a Scriptural sentence in Welsh, so as to speak intelligibly to the people, are all that point out the tomb of my once-loved Carmen. In that spot, by the side of her who was my true helpmate in life, shall I too be laid when it pleases God to summon me from this mortal life. This is my earnest wish, and to you, dear pupil, I commit the trust of seeing this charge duly executed.

Once, and only once, after the last ceremony was over, did I see Lilith. I forced myself to the effort of taking leave of her, although I felt it must be equally painful to both of us. It was essentially due to her unvarying goodness to Carmen and myself, and especially so to her own noble character, which had proved itself superior to the common weakness

and susceptibilities of her sex in so many instances. I wished also to confirm my departed wife's solemn bequest of our child to her motherly care. It was the last, best proof of my veneration for her character, the highest tribute a parent could give of esteem—of respect—of affection. Few words were spoken on either side. I did little more than express the wish. Lilith felt too deeply the peculiar position in which she had once stood between me and Carmen, to betray by words her inward emotion ; but she accepted the trust as I gave it, and seized, with a melancholy pleasure, the opportunity she would now have afforded her of protecting and educating my poor motherless child.

With a delicate generosity, which called forth my utmost gratitude, did she accept, and worthily has she fulfilled the obligation.

Lilith never married ; but for many long years, during which I saw her not, did most conscientiously devote herself to the task of forming Julia's girlhood, both in character and education ; but a weary period elapsed ere my sweet cousin and I again met.

Amongst my poor wife's papers, I met with some

lines, dated apparently only a few days before her death, which I here enclose you, and which seem to throw some light upon the depressed state of her mind, weakened as it undoubtedly was at that period by physical suffering.

Another sleepless night!
Many, yet few ;
For this short life of mine
Hath still to do.

Sad Moon, who lookest down,
Serene and still,
O'er them who watch, or sleep,
O'er good or ill.

Hast thou no voice for me,
In thy mild power,
Kindly to light the way
In that dark hour ?

Ye Stars, that countless shine,
Symbols on high,
Have ye no voice for me
Before I die ?

Doth not full purpose link
Your golden chain,
Above this world of ours
Of care and pain ?

Doth not your presence bring
Such thoughts of bliss,
Gain'd by the wondrous change,
That Death I kiss ?

Do ye not bid me fill
These hours of pain
With the deep thought of God,
Unto my gain ?

And search my coward heart,
And seek to know
What hold of heaven I grasp,
Before I go !

The sequel of my history is already well known to you. I rose subsequently, as you are aware, to the highest consideration in my profession. I settled myself in London, and returned to the practice of my art with redoubled ardour. I had now no cares to disturb me ; but too many reminiscences from which it was a comfort to escape. There is nothing like having a dominant occupation—a work which engages both mind and hand—for procuring the absence, or at least forgetfulness, of sorrow. Attention, taste, reflection, love of art, reputation—all these spurs to exertion, these motive powers of human industry, are successively brought into action, and force the mind to leave the fruitless contemplation of the past—nay even of the present—for the hopeful prospects of the future.

This was my great solace, my invaluable moral

compensation for the troubles and disappointments of my earlier life. Not that mere study in the closet, or even days and years of confinement to the work of sculpture, will alone suffice to create an Artist. No, he must at times issue forth into the world, see and converse with and understand others beside himself, and imbibe the taste and feeling for nature at the fountain-head, even in the world without. He must observe mankind in order to portray or to express them faithfully ; he is not the copier of this or that subject that sits to him ; but his is the gifted understanding on which Nature's bold types are to stamp their full and generic expression : he is emphatically the reproducer of the divine Image—the Image of man.

I found my previous travels and experience of great use to me in giving me a variety of thought, and a diversity of ideas, which I am convinced I should never have acquired had I been left to vegetate in London. In design, in composition, and character, I found that I profited much by the remembrance of figures, groups, and accessories, which I had met with in various parts of the world.

My cousin lived tranquilly and happily for many years after the period of which I have been writing. She was allowed the blessing of seeing my Julia grow up to be the treasure of our hearts, and to be united to the man of her choice, a brave soldier of high and honourable character, though without fortune. He was amply provided for on his marriage by the munificence of Lilith to her ward. Julia is now a happy wife and mother ; and it has been my annually recurring pleasure to meet her and her husband either in town or in the country, though I have never visited them at Plas Owen. That spot I saw but once more in later life, on the occasion of my dear cousin's last illness. I was summoned to attend her deathbed : she died still young, beloved, and lamented by all about her. Never was beauty of life and of death so thoroughly exemplified.

Julia, in heart and affection her true daughter, attended her last moments. To her was bequeathed the whole estate of Plas Owen and its dependencies,—she, and her husband taking the name of Owen.

It is not for man to weigh the inscrutable decrees

of Providence; but it is the duty of a reasonable being so far to ponder the vicissitudes to which he is exposed, as to try to understand, as far as human powers go, the end and scheme of his existence. In reflecting thus on my past life, chequered as you have seen it by difficulty and success, to be thwarted by fresh obstacles, which yet have been by the mercy of that Providence again overcome, you may draw this inference: that although industry and conduct may ensure reward under common circumstances, it is only the power and goodness of God that can repair absolute, overwhelming misfortune. The lesson I would therefore inculcate on my younger friends is to exert all their diligence in the hope of rising in the world, but not exclusively to depend upon that or any other talent without a higher assistance, which must be sought from above, and deserved by the exercise of those moral qualities dictated to them by Religion. Let such, my dear friend, be your rule of life in your general connexion with the world as well as the particular walk of your profession. But remember that in this also, suffering gives Power, and that it is only by a mind whose just confidence rises

superior to trials undergone, and not that vain confidence which fancies itself already the master of difficulties not yet overcome, that great Works are achieved. Till we have known suffering, we have not felt;—and the Artist who feels not, has not attained the Probation, which is the only gate to a true Knowledge of God and his works.